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MABEL'S PROGRESS.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "AUNT MARGARET'S TROUBLE."

BOOK II.

CHAPTER VII. THE STORMY PETREL OF PRIVATE LIFE.

A DAY or two subsequent to Mrs. Saxelby's visit to her daughter at Eastfield, the family at Bramley Manor was visited by a domestic storm, which, though leading to no serious immediate result, was the cause of a great deal of pain and anger, and left behind it an amount of heart-burning and soreness, which only a family quarrel can produce.

The Honourable Arthur Skidley's regiment being ordered away from Hammerham, and that gentleman's consequent departure being imminent, it became necessary for Walter Charlewood to reveal to his father the amount of the debt he had incurred, and to prefer a request for a considerable sum of money. Mr. Charlewood was a very wealthy man, and—as may usually be observed of men whose business renders their income more or less elastic—he spent his wealth with a liberal hand. Among the luxuries he desired for himself and his children, was the society of persons superior by birth or rank to themselves. And he had an unexpressed but decided notion that this, like other good things, was to be attained by a judicious expenditure of cash. Still, the magnitude of the sum he was now called on to advance, so far exceeded his estimate of the value received, that he began to discover that the acquaintance of even so dashing and aristocratic a personage as the younger son of Lord Higsworth might be purchased too dearly.

"I won't pay it, sir," he had said in the first moment of his anger and surprise. "I won't advance a farthing."

"It's a debt of honour, father. I shall be disgraced."

"Then *be* disgraced," Mr. Charlewood had retorted; adding, in the heat of his wrath, a commendation to his son to be something else also for his folly. But, of course, he knew very well that *le must* and that he would pay Walter's debts for him. He grumbled to his wife, telling her that Watty's reckless and selfish extravagance was all owing to her weak indulgence. He scolded Augusta into a fit of the sulks, when she ventured to ask some

question as to the offence her brother had committed; he even snubbed his favourite Penelope, in the extremity of his ill-humour and vexation. In short, for more than a week, black looks and sharp speeches were very rife in Bramley Manor; and Walter—his jaunty self-confidence utterly subdued for once—sneaked about the house like a whipped schoolboy, avoiding his father's eye, and creeping surreptitiously at unaccustomed hours into his mother's boudoir to be petted and consoled, and to have the ruffled plumes of his self-love gently smoothed by caressing fingers.

It was a peculiarity of Miss Fluke that she invariably appeared among her friends whenever foul weather seemed to be imminent in the domestic sky: scenting the approach of tempest by some fine instinct, and hovering over the angry billows like a stormy petrel.

Miss Fluke came to Bramley Manor, and had not been closeted ten minutes with Mrs. Charlewood before the latter had revealed to her, with many lamentations and considerable use of her pocket-handkerchief, the story of Walter's troubles, and his father's stern displeasure.

"Charlewood was 'arsh, I consider. Very 'arsh. Of course I know Watty ought to have spoken sooner. But law, there! Who can wonder? Young men will be young men; and Watty has never been accustomed to think anything about money. 'Owever, 'is father 'as paid the debt, and I suppose he'll come round in time. A 'undred or two. Nothing to Charlewood. He'll never miss 'em."

Miss Fluke shook her head with much severity.

"Dear Mrs. Charlewood," she said, "ought we not to look upon this in the light of a judgment?"

"A judgment! Goodness me, Miss Fluke!"

"Yes; it shows what comes of worldliness, and pleasure-seeking, and the society of the ungodly. I have a very interesting little tract here, which is full of precious experiences. Do you think Walter would read it, if I left it for him?"

"I—don't—know," said Mrs. Charlewood, doubtfully.

"Well, there it is, at all events. I'll put it on your table. The incidents relate to a little boy of five years old (the child of a drunken cobbler), who got conversion and became quite a little saint on earth. It is called *The Little*

Soul's Punctuation, or A Full-Stop for Small Sinners. It applies very well indeed to Walter's case, and would do him great good if he'd be persuaded to read it in a proper spirit."

"Thank you, Miss Fluke," said Mrs. Charlewood, with a shade of offence in her manner, "but I think you make rather too much of Watty's little error. He has a lively disposition, has Watty. Quite lively. 'Igh his spirit may be, and 'aughty. But his 'art is right."

To do Miss Fluke justice, she was no respecter of persons, and had no more idea of sparing the rich Mrs. Charlewood than the poorest inhabitant of her father's parish. She therefore at once opened fire; bringing all her big guns to bear on her hostess, and sending such a broadside of texts about her ears, that poor Mrs. Charlewood's round red cheeks grew pale as she listened, and she was thankful when Augusta's entrance into the room created a diversion.

"Have you heard," said Miss Fluke, turning to Augusta with a sudden pouncing movement, "have you heard about Mabel Earnshaw?" Miss Fluke's eyes were opened to their full extent, and she glared ominously, first at Mrs. Charlewood and then at her daughter.

"No," replied Augusta, languidly sticking a needle into some wool-work, and apparently finding it necessary to repose a while before pulling it out again, "I never hear anything about her now."

"What is it about Mabel?" asked Mrs. Charlewood. "No bad news, I 'ope."

"Awful," returned Miss Fluke, concentrating an incredible amount of moral reprobation into her utterance of the word, and performing an elaborate and vigorous shudder: "most awful."

"Lord bless my soul!" exclaimed Mrs. Charlewood.

"Oh, if it's anything horrid, don't tell me, please," said Augusta, putting her jewelled fingers in her ears. "I can't bear hearing horrid things."

"As any accident 'appened?" said Mrs. Charlewood.

"Unless a merciful Providence turns her heart, Mabel Earnshaw is going to perdition headlong," was Miss Fluke's alarming reply. To go headlong to perdition did not, however, appear to belong, in Miss Augusta's estimation, to the category of "horrid things." She immediately took her fingers out of her ears, and prepared herself to listen with composure.

"Dear Miss Fluke," said Mrs. Charlewood, with her hand on her side, "I declare you've given me quite a turn. Well, there! I should be awfully sorry if any 'arm 'appened to Mabel Earnshaw. She used to be a great favourite of mine; and I can't abear to drop folks, and turn my back on 'em so coolly as some people."

Augusta faintly raised her handsome eyebrows, and tossed her head, but took no further notice of her mother's implied rebuke.

"Well," said Miss Fluke, "I have to tell you what you'll hardly credit, but what is true. Mabel Earnshaw is going——" here Miss Fluke

suddenly changed her tone, and uttered the three last words of her speech very rapidly in a loud distinct whisper, "going—ON THE STAGE."

Then she sat back in her chair, and contemplated her hearers, with her arms folded tightly across her breast.

"No?" exclaimed Mrs. Charlewood. Miss Fluke made no verbal reply, but nodded five or six times with extraordinary vehemence.

"How absurd," said Miss Augusta. "But I don't know that I'm very much surprised. Mabel was getting queerer and queerer lately, and besides, you know, she never *was* quite like other people."

"Dear me! How I should like to have known her, whoever she was," cried Penelope, appearing at the door, attired for walking, and accompanied by her brother Walter. "How d'y'e do, Miss Fluke? Do tell me, Gussy, who was that delightful individual who 'never was quite like other people.' She—I think I heard you say *she*—must have been a refreshing creature."

"Oh, I dare say *you'll* think her latest craze all right and charming. Very likely. I was speaking of Mabel Earnshaw, and she's going on the stage; that's all," rejoined Augusta, coolly.

"What!" cried Miss Charlewood, fairly startled, for the instant, out of her self-possession (a rare circumstance with her), and dropping into a chair. "Mabel going on the stage! I don't believe it."

"I grieve to assure you that it is too, too, too, too, true," said Miss Fluke. "I know it for a fact, on the best authority."

"Oh, that of course," replied Penelope, with very unceremonious brusquerie. "People always know things on the best authority. But who told you?"

"Well, Miss Charlewood, *since* you ask me, I am bound to tell you that it was—her own mother!" Miss Fluke brought out this last revelation as if it were the crowning horror of the business.

"I wonder why in the world Mrs. Saxelby should have thought of telling *you* such a thing?" said Penelope.

The speech was not a polite one; but Miss Fluke was quite impervious to its discourtesy.

"The fact is," she replied, looking round with severe gravity upon her auditors, "I asked her."

Miss Fluke *had* asked Mrs. Saxelby as to her daughter's intention of becoming an actress, and had, moreover, made a pilgrimage to Hazlehurst for the express purpose of so doing. Mrs. Hutchins, by dint of prying and listening to her lodgers' conversation, had arrived at some suspicion of the truth. She had discovered from Corda that Miss Earnshaw had relatives on the stage. She had concluded at once that the letter with the Eastfield post-mark, addressed to Mr. Trescott, was from Miss Earnshaw. And partly for the gratification of her own curiosity, and partly to curry favour with Miss Fluke, had revealed to that lady most of what she knew and guessed.

Miss Fluke's account of Mrs. Saxelby's full

admission of her daughter's intention, filled the Charlewoods with surprise: though each member of the family received the news in a different manner, according to his or her peculiar character. Mrs. Charlewood, as became a devout Flukeite, expressed much grief and horror; though the real, kind motherly heart of the woman occasionally asserted itself in such exclamations as, "Well, I do 'ope Mabel may think better of it in time, and find a good 'usband to take care of her!" or, "There! I don't know whether it's wicked, but I can't 'elp wishing her success. 'Eaven forgive me!" Augusta professed languidly that, though of course it was very shocking, she for her part was not so much astonished as the rest, and that she had long been of opinion that such outrageous and improper conduct must be the natural result of strong-mindedness, and the setting up of one's own judgment against that of the people whose legitimate business it was to do all the thinking. Walter shrugged his shoulders at his sister, and lounging out of the room, opined that Miss Earnshaw would make a "stunning actress," and that he would certainly go and see her, if ever he had the opportunity. Whereupon Miss Fluke groaned audibly.

Penelope always found Miss Fluke intensely irritating, and it seemed as if Miss Fluke's presence excited her scornful spirit of contradiction to its highest pitch. Albeit, she remained quite silent during Miss Fluke's very long and elaborate description of her interview with Mrs. Saxelby at Hazlehurst, and her solemn and emphatic announcement of the appalling fact that Mabel "actually had an aunt who was a player, and that she had been brought up amongst those kind of people from childhood!"

"What a shame of Mrs. Saxelby to keep it so quiet! She never used to say a word about her family," exclaimed Augusta. "I call it getting into people's houses on false pretences."

Penelope turned on her sister with a sudden flash that was like the dart of a panther. "Mrs. Saxelby would probably have had no objection to speak of the position of her family connections, Augusta, had she not thought it might have seemed like boasting, to us."

"Boasting?"

"Certainly. Mrs. Saxelby was always very nice and good natured; but she knew perfectly well that our revered grandfather had carried a hod."

Augusta coloured high with spite and vexation.

"Really, Penny," she said, flouncing up from her chair, "you are too absurd. Comparing us with—I won't stay to hear such things said!" Miss Augusta's rich silk dress trailed and rustled out of the room.

"Umph!" said Penelope, contemplatively leaning her chin on her hand. "How queer it all is, ain't it? Augusta is haughty enough for a duchess, and handsome enough for two duchesses. I'd back her for beauty and impertinence against Lady Clara Vere de Vere herself. And yet, you know, our grandfather *did* carry a hod, Miss Fluke!"

At dinner that evening none of the family alluded to the news. The cloud had not yet sufficiently cleared from Mr. Charlewood's brow to make his wife and children as much at their ease in his presence as formerly; and what little conversation passed between them was carried on almost in whispers. Clement, too, looked ill and anxious; and Penelope wondered in her own mind, as she observed his pale face and abstracted manner, whether he had heard of Mabel's design, and whether his dejection might not possibly be traceable to his knowledge of it. "I can't quite make Clement out," said Miss Charlewood to herself, as she watched her brother across the dinner-table. "At one time I thought it was a mere passing fancy that would die a natural death very comfortably; but now—I don't know—I'm afraid there's something more in it. Poor dear old Clem."

If Penelope Charlewood had what is called a soft place in her heart at all, it was occupied by her brother Clement. Later in the evening, when tea was brought into the drawing-room, and he had seated himself apart from the rest in a secluded corner of the large room, with a book in his hand, Penelope brought him a cup of tea, and then seating herself beside him, said in a low voice:

"We have heard some odd news to-day, Clem. Perhaps you know it already. Mabel Earnshaw is going on the stage."

Clement looked up, and the colour mounted to his brow, as he asked sharply:

"Who says so?"

"Miss Fluke says so. She came here to-day, fully primed and loaded with the tidings."

"Confound that woman! She is the most intolerable and meddlesome fool in Hammerham. I wish to God some man would marry her, and take her away!"

"Oh, Clem!" cried his sister. "What an awful wish against some man! But is it true about Mabel?"

"I wish, with all my soul, I could say no, Penny. But I by no means tell you that is a certain fact. Will you, to oblige me, refrain from repeating this tattle—at all events, until it is confirmed past doubt."

For once in her life, Penelope checked the sharp speech that rose to the tip of her tongue. Clement's earnest pleading look went to her heart, and called up a remembrance of some childish trouble they had shared and surmounted together. She gave him her hand, and watched him, as he left the room, with eyes that were veiled with unaccustomed moisture.

"Poor Clem! Poor dear old boy! He is the very best fellow in all the world; and if it could make him happy, I almost wish——"

What Miss Charlewood almost wished, she did not distinctly tell herself on that occasion, for she brought her meditations to an abrupt termination with an impatient shake of her head; and, opening the piano, rattled off a brilliant set of variations with a clear metallic touch and a rapid finger.

CHAPTER VIII. CLEMENT COMES FOR HIS ANSWER.

A FIRST declaration of love! Whenever Mabel had indulged in day-dreams, it had always seemed to her that the first utterance of words of love in her ear, must surely fill the whole world with a sort of glamour; that some mysterious and delightful revolution would take place in her being; and that, as the poets sing, the sky would appear bluer, the sun brighter, and all the world more beautiful.

These marvels were to come to pass, of course, on the hypothesis that she too would love, and that her maiden affection, lying coyly within her heart of hearts, like a shut lily, would give forth all its hidden sweetness at the warm pleading of the beloved one, even as a bud is wooed by the sunbeams into a perfect flower.

Mabel was only seventeen, and the practical good sense and clear-sightedness of her character were oddly blended with an innocent romance, such as might have belonged to a princess in a fairy tale. Poor Mabel!

When she awoke on the morning after her mother's visit to Eastfield, roused by the toneless clangour of a cracked bell, she found no magic glamour on the earth, no deeper azure in the sky, no added glory in the sunshine. There was the mean bare breakfast-room. There was the morning psalm read aloud by Mrs. Hatchett, on a system of punctuation peculiar to herself, which consisted in making a full stop at the end of each verse, whatever its sense might be. There was Miss Dobbin; there was the ugly Swiss governess; there was the same old dreary round to toil through, that there had been yesterday, and that there would be to-morrow.

Stay though! Not quite the same, for to-day was Sunday, and though Mabel had to accompany the children to church in the morning and afternoon, the evening hours would be her own. None but those who have been subjected, perforce, to the close companionship of utterly uncongenial minds, can conceive the sense of positive refreshment that fell upon Mabel when she found herself alone: alone and unmolested, in her bedroom, with two clear hours before her to employ as she would.

"Is it all real?" she said to herself, as she sat down on her bed in the chill garret, with a shawl wrapped round her. "Is it real? I must think."

Her interview with Clement had been so strange and hurried, his declaration so unexpected, and her own agitation so excessive, that at first she had only felt stunned and bewildered, and, as she had told Clement, "very sorry." But by degrees a clear remembrance of what had passed came into her mind. His look, his words, the touch of his hand—she recalled them all vividly.

"He said, 'I love you. I love you with my whole heart!'"

She whispered the words in the silence of the room; but, softly as she breathed them out, their sound made the eloquent blood rise in her cheek, and she put her hands before her face,

as though there were a prying witness present.

If she believed Clement's words, she owed it to him to examine her own heart and give him the innermost truth that it contained. But to find that truth! Ah, that was difficult. How different it all was from any love-story she had ever pictured to herself!

Suddenly a thought pierced her heart like a swift sharp knife. What would Mr. Charlewood say? What would Penelope say? They would accuse her of having sought Clement, or laid traps for him, or of stooping to scheme and plot for the honour of an alliance with the Charlewood family. Mabel sprang to her feet, and paced up and down the room.

"I will go to my own people. I will follow my own path. I will show that I can reject vulgar wealth, and despise vulgar pride. There is a world outside their narrow limits—a world of art and poetry and imagination, which they can none of them conceive or comprehend. *He* is good and kind, but he cannot understand me." The hot tears were streaming unchecked down her face. "I do not love him. I am sure now, that I do not love him. I will work and strive for mamma and Dooley; and, if I fail, they will not love me the less."

Penelope had been thoroughly right in her judgment, when she counselled her father to rely on Mabel Earnshaw's pride as his surest ally.

Mabel stopped at length in her restless pacing, and, going to her trunk, unlocked it, and drew forth the dingy, battered, precious little Shakespeare.

At first, she could scarcely fix her attention on the words before her. But soon the spell mastered her. She yielded herself up to it with all the enthusiasm of a nature peculiarly susceptible of such influences. And the spirit of poetry bore her up on its strong wings, above the dust and clash and turmoil of this work-a-day world. She came back with a mind refreshed and strengthened, as a healthy intellect must ever be by the legitimate exercise of its imaginative faculties, and with a spirit calmed and braced. She wrote to her aunt Mary, and despatched the letter to the care of the person mentioned by Mr. Trescott, and then waited with what patience she might for the result.

A week, which seemed to Clement the longest he had ever passed in his life, went by before he was able to return to Eastfield. But at length one morning Mabel was summoned from her post beside the jingling superannuated pianoforte, to Mrs. Hatchett's private parlour. She knew perfectly well who had come to speak with her; and though she had been preparing herself for the interview, and had conjured up a hundred times in her own mind the words that she would say, yet she felt as she approached the parlour that her thoughts were scattered, and that her spirits were as much agitated as on that memorable night.

"Come in, Miss Earnshaw, if you please. Here is a gentleman who desires to speak with you."

Mrs. Hatchett waved her hand towards Clement Charlewood, who stood beside the fireplace.

Mabel was white, but betrayed no other sign of emotion, and greeted Clement quietly.

"Mr. Charlewood," continued Mrs. Hatchett, referring ostentatiously to a card she held in her hand, "tells me that he is an old friend of your family. I have told him that as a general rule I do not approve of young persons in my employ receiving visits from gentlemen. However, in this case——" Mrs. Hatchett finished her speech by a dignified inclination of the head, and walked slowly out of the room. The good lady was, in fact, considerably impressed by Mabel's receiving a visit from a member of the rich Charlewood family.

Mabel sat down by the round centre table covered with tawdry books, and Clement remained standing opposite to her. For a minute or two, neither spoke. At length Mabel said: "Have you been to Hazlehurst lately, Mr. Charlewood? Have you seen mamma and Julian?"

"No. Had I gone to Hazlehurst, I could not have refrained from speaking of—of you; and until I had seen you again, I resolved to keep my secret in my own heart."

There was silence again for a space.

"I have come for my answer, Mabel. But before you give it to me, let me repeat my solemn promise to be your friend through all chances and changes. It may be that I shall never have the power to serve you, but at least believe that I shall ever have the will."

She raised her head and thanked him by a look.

"Tell me, Mabel, that you have thought of the words I said to you that night."

"I have thought of them; and I wish to answer them kindly and—and gratefully. I know I ought to be grateful for such words, so spoken. But I cannot answer them as you would have me."

"There is no question of gratitude, Mabel. Why should you be grateful to me? I could not help loving you."

"Mr. Charlewood, I am very sorry."

"Oh, Mabel, Mabel!" cried the young man, passionately, "you cannot know how it cuts me to the heart to hear you say so! Mabel, dear Mabel, I know that in many ways I am not worthy of you, but I believe that I could make you happy, if you could bring yourself to love and trust me. I spoke too suddenly the other night, but I was hurried away by the thought of losing you, and by the prospect of your going away to embrace the career you contemplate. I knew for the first time how dear you were to me, by the pang of my heart when your mother told me of your project. Let me save you from it, Mabel, my beloved!"

He had taken her hand, which she had suffered to lie unresistingly in his; but at his last words she withdrew it, and looked up at him.

"Save me, Mr. Charlewood? I do not understand you."

"Forgive me, Mabel, if I offend you; but this is too serious a matter for polite common-places that mean nothing. God knows I am actuated by no selfish motive; if I knew I never were to see your dear face again, I would still urge you to abandon this scheme."

"And I would still reply that on this matter your mind and mine are as far asunder as the poles. We cannot see it in the same light, Mr. Charlewood. How should you, who have been born and educated in the midst of Hammerham millionaires, be able to conceive the true life of an artist? Pardon me; but you have rightly said this is not a matter for polite common-places."

Clement had fallen back a pace or two, and stood regarding her with a look of pained surprise.

"Mabel, you are angry, and your anger makes you a little unjust, I think."

"I am not doing injustice to your motive," she answered, quietly. "I know you speak the truth exactly as you see it, and in all singleness of mind; but do you not perceive how impossible it would be for us ever to agree on this matter?"

"Be my wife, Mabel, and the question will be set at rest for ever."

"That question; yes, perhaps," she answered, with a vivid blush; "but there would be a thousand other questions on which we should be at issue. And then your family——"

"My family?"

"Yes; do you think they would be willing to receive a penniless teacher out of Mrs. Hatchett's school, and welcome her as your bride?"

Clement's face brightened suddenly.

"Is it possible that you have been allowing such a thought to weigh with you? My child, you would not surely sacrifice my happiness, and perhaps your own, to a foolish pride? You are proud, Mabel; very proud. I did not know it till to-day; but if the thought of what my family might say is troubling you——"

"It is not at all troubling me."

"Well—if it is present to your mind—dismiss it. My people love you very much, Mabel; but even though it were otherwise, I say, not only that I do not think you ought to heed their disapproval, but that I am very sure you ought not to do so. If that is the only obstacle——"

"No, Mr. Charlewood, that is not the only obstacle. I—do not love you."

"Mabel!"

"Hear me out. I have thought of the words you said to me very deeply. I have tried to find the truth of my own heart. It was due to you that I should so try. I have told myself that if I loved you—loved you with such love as a girl should bear towards her future husband—surely I should be willing and happy to give up all other plans and projects for your sake. You would be the dearest thing on earth to me. Well! That is not so. I love my mother and my brother better. I love my own people who were good to us when we were helpless and desolate, better. I love my plans and dreams,

the path that I can cleave for myself, the chances of it, the hopes of it, the risks of it, if you will—I love all these with independence and freedom, better than I love you. You, who are true and good, will not tell me that I ought, so feeling, to accept your love.”

She had spoken rapidly in her excitement, and now paused almost breathless, with her flushed face raised to his, and her clear child-like eyes bright with latent tears.

He looked at her for a moment, and then, turning away, dropped his face upon his hands, and leaned against the mantelpiece. When he raised his head after a while, he was deadly pale, and his face wore a look of suffering that touched Mabel's heart.

“I am trying to do right,” she said, in a softer voice. I am grieved, sorely grieved, if I give you pain.”

“If you give me pain! No matter, Mabel; no matter for my pain; but can nothing turn you from this accursed project? Good God! it drives me almost mad to think of your leaving home, friends, everything, to cast in your lot with a set of strolling players.”

The change in her countenance, as he said the words, was as though a mask of stone had been placed over it.

“I think you forget, Mr. Charlewood, that you are speaking of my father's nearest and dearest relatives. It is useless to prolong this interview. We only drift further and further asunder. Good-bye, Mr. Charlewood. Forgive me, if you can, for the sorrow I have innocently caused you. You will forget it—and me.”

She held out her hand, but he did not take it. “Are you so obdurate? Must we part so, Mabel?”

“It is better. Some day—years hence, perhaps—we may meet as friends. I shall always be grateful for your goodness to us. Good-bye. God bless you!”

She still held out her hand, but he did not seem to see or heed it. In another moment the door was gently closed, and she was gone.

PEARLS OF PRICE.

THE happy purchaser of Prince Esterhazy's pantaloons is a man to be envied. He may sit upon pearls, lie upon pearls, kneel upon pearls; or, if he elect to strip the pearls from the velvet garment, he can stock the market with them. The outer world seems to believe that the Esterhazy jewels were mostly diamonds. The brilliants were certainly glittering enough to produce quite a Blaze of Triumph. There was the diamond-studded cartouche-box, which brought about a thousand guineas at the recent sale; there was the diamond in the head of the walking-stick, seventeen hundred guineas; and the diamond-headed order of the Golden Fleece, four thousand guineas; and the chain with the lion's head diamond, ten thousand guineas; and the dia-

mond-hilted, scabbarded, and belted sword, seven thousand guineas; and the gorgeous diamond aigrette or plume, eight thousand guineas. But the garments which formed a background to these glittering brilliants, were braided and brodered with pearls, not with diamonds. The hussar jacket, the tunic, the vest, the pantaloons, were nearly white with these precious bits; and the twenty-two hundred guineas given for them were but little concerned with the velvet on which the pearls were sewn.

A glut of pearls in the market, owing to this grand distribution, is, we hear, to be increased by a real pearl nursery—an application of the new art of pisciculture to the pearl oyster—a method of coaxing the fish to produce pearls just in the place where men can most easily dredge or dive for them. Mr. Markham has within a few weeks given an account of certain proceedings in the East, tending to apply to the pearl oyster the same kind of discipline which Mr. Frank Buckland and other experimenters have applied to the edible oyster and the salmon.

As Mr. Markham's personal familiarity with the subject comes down to so late a date as last summer, it possesses a value beyond that of mere cyclopædic knowledge. The district which he notices is that of Tinnivelly, nearly at the extreme southern point of India, where the Gulf of Manaar separates the coast of the Carnatic from Ceylon. It is believed to have been the seat of a valuable pearl fishery from very remote times, and is known to have been a source of revenue to the Portuguese, Dutch, and English authorities, who successively ruled that part of India, employing four or five hundred boats, and fifty or sixty thousand persons, at a certain period every year. But the banks were fished too often. Pearl oysters, like other fish, become scarce if the fishery is pursued too recklessly; and this had gone to such a length that twenty-six years passed without the appearance (as tested by examination) of a sufficient number of them to make a fishery worth while at Tinnivelly. By degrees, however, the banks became again peopled with these much-valued fish. The Madras government ordered them to be carefully protected, and seven years ago the fishing recommenced.

The fishing for pearls is a strange employment, carried on by divers who can remain under water during a time that would stifle other men. The pearl-fishers belong to the caste of Parawas, and have been Roman Catholics ever since the early Jesuits converted them. They age rapidly, drink hard, but their general character is good, and they are capital boatmen as well as divers. Travellers credit them with a power of remaining under water for four, six, or eight minutes; but Mr. Markham states that the longest time for the Tinnivelly men is one minute eight seconds. The headman of the caste, an hereditary office, is called the Jati Talaven. Quite early in the year, a fleet of boats starts off, at such an hour as to reach the banks, cast anchor, and begin operation at

daybreak. Each boat has about ten rowers and as many divers, with a steersman. There is a stage at each side of the boat; from this stage the divers descend into the water, five working while the other five are resting. The natives, by constant practice from childhood, have acquired the habit of using the toes as nimbly as we do our thumbs and fingers; and the pearl-diver avails himself of this power. He grasps with the toes of the right foot a rope from which a stone of twenty pounds weight or so is suspended, and with those of the left a net bag, having the mouth kept open by a hoop; with his right hand he grasps a second rope, and with his left he holds his nostrils. Some of them oil their bodies, and some stuff their ears and nostrils with cotton. Down they go, the heavy stone facilitating the descent, and the rope in the right hand maintaining their communication with the boat. Sometimes the diver hangs the net round his neck; but, at any rate, he uses his hands so nimbly as to pick up as many oysters as he can before his breath fails him, and this may amount to a hundred if the haul is a good one. He then gives a signal by means of his rope, and the boatmen draw him up. Thus in gangs of five they do their work, each gang being succeeded by another which have had their short period of rest; and all the divers make many plunges in the course of a day. The actual number of working hours is small; but the work is very trying, and cannot be unduly continued with impunity. The divers greatly dread the ground-shark, a terrible visitor in those seas; and, in the Persian Gulf fisheries, there is the sword-fish to add to the grim contingencies. The men pray, before the fleet of boats leaves the shore, that they may be protected from these enemies; fortified, too, in some districts by the exorcisms of shark-charmers, who manage to dovetail their paganism with their Christianity in a curious way.

What it is that these men bring up from the sea bottom is not exactly an oyster; it is rather like a large mussel, which has the power of forming a byssus or short cable of fibres with which to anchor itself to a rock; and, as each bank consists of rocky ground rising in patches from a sandy bottom (with perhaps thirty or forty feet of water over them), there is plenty of anchoring-ground for the fish.

After all, what is a pearl? Everybody knows that it is found within the shell, but everybody disputes as to the how and the why of its formation. When the boats—perhaps a hundred or more in a fleet, and each bringing (having its burthen of eight to fifteen tons) with it as many oysters as the richness of the catch will allow—have come to land, the oysters are thrown into pits, where they are allowed so far to putrify as to open easily, and reveal the treasure within. But there may be no such treasure. The oyster makes its pearl at its own good time, and there is no external sign to denote what the shell may contain. Whether the pearl be a disease; or a

foreign substance which the oyster wishes to hide by a varnish of that beautiful something that we call mother-of-pearl; or whether it be a congealed drop of dew swallowed by the oyster (as suggested by Pliny); or an ovum of exaggerated growth; or a collection of siliceous particles from the food eaten by the oyster; or an annoying parasite which the fish smothers with the nacreous or mother-of-pearl substance, are questions still waiting for solution. The pretty term, mother-of-pearl, bears significant testimony to the prevalent belief that the substance of the pearl is the same in kind as the lustrous, iridescent lining of the shell—a lining which renders the pearl-shell valuable in the market, whether it encloses a pearl or not.

The pearl-fishery is quite a lottery—an uncertainty from beginning to end; and an intense speculative interest therefore surrounds it. The oysters are really bought before the shells are opened, and before it is known whether they contain any pearls or not. If there be any, the pearl may be worth a few shillings or hundreds of pounds. Mr. Markham states that, when a fishing is about to take place, one thousand oysters are fished up, opened, and put into a canoe; they are regarded as a sample of the whole fishery, likely, so far as can be guessed, to present a fair average quality. The pearls found in them are submitted to the inspection of the most experienced pearl-merchants, who classify them, according to a certain system, into no less than ten kinds: *anie*, pearls of perfect sphericity and lustre; *anathorie*, failing slightly in one or other of these two qualities; *masengoe*, failing slightly in both; *kalippo*, failing still more; *karonel*, double pearls; *pæsal*, misshapen pearls; *oodwoe*, beauty (this seems rather indefinite); *mandangoe*, bent or folded pearls; *kural*, very small and misshapen; and *thool*, seed-pearls. The number of pearls of each of these classes found in the sample is announced by the experts, and this establishes the price of the shells at the outset; but the price fluctuates afterwards, according to the frequency of the prizes or rich hauls. In the year eighteen hundred and sixty-one, the price began at seventy to eighty rupees per thousand shells; but, as the result did not bear out the anticipations of the first purchasers, the price gradually lowered to forty, twenty, and even as low as seventeen rupees. The sales were held on the beach, about two miles north of the town of Tuticorin, at a place called the Silawatooree, a Tamil name for a fish-market. The shells were sold on large platforms, called kottoos; there were a few bungalows and hundreds of huts around, which were the scene of lively and exciting bargainings. In the preceding year, when the Tinnevely fishery revived after thirty years' stagnation, the price began at fifteen rupees per thousand shells, and went up to forty rupees. The number fished up and sold during that season was nearly sixteen millions; and the Madras government netted twenty thousand

pounds by them, after paying all expenses. After two good years, there were four successive years when the oysters almost deserted the banks; but there was a reappearance of them last year, and the government want to see whether the now-favourite art of pisciculture will come to their aid.

It would, indeed, be a novelty if we could rear pearls—manufacture them, so to speak, by coaxing the oysters which produce them. Captain Phipps, the present master-attendant and superintendent at Tinnevely, has a small iron steamer, the Godavery, a small teak-built schooner, the Emily, and a still smaller cutter, the Pearl, at his disposal; with these he subjects the oyster-banks to a daily examination, fishing them, or guarding them from other fishers. Sometimes free trade in pearl-fishing has been advocated; but this would lead to an exhaustion of the banks by reckless fishing. The harvest of chinchona bark in South America, and that of teak timber in the Malabar forests, are known to have been injured by a greedy eagerness to bring as much as possible to market as quickly as possible—to “kill the goose that lays the golden egg.” Captain Phipps is trying to guard the pearl-banks at Tinnevely from a similar calamity. He wishes to lay down a nursery of young pearl oysters, to replenish the banks. He has found a bank only six or seven feet under water, and here are his babies. An oblong space is enclosed; two-year-old pearl oysters are laid down on the bank within it; blocks of coral or of rock receive the spawn; and the young oysters from this spawn are removed to the deep-sea banks in due season. This removal is necessary, because it would be impossible to enclose an artificial space large enough to hold as many grown shells as are required for a remunerative fishery; and because it is believed that the quality of the pearl depends a good deal on the depth and clearness of the sea in which it is found. It is during the period of early growth that the pearl oysters are most exposed to danger on their native banks; and the nursery system will, it is believed, ensure to them a much briefer exposure to such dangers. As a single pearl oyster sometimes produces as many as twelve million eggs, there is abundant encouragement to give a fair trial to the nursery system. The nursery was stocked, last year, with young oysters obtained from various banks; and naturalists are watching the result with some interest. As the pearl oysters reach maturity in six years, the plan is that the fishing is not to take place earlier than this: if the oysters are of different ages on different banks, an annual fishery will be ensured; and there will be measures of conservancy adopted, by frequent examination of the banks, and weeding out of everything that is detrimental to the growth and well-being of the pearl-maker.

Mother-of-pearl lines nearly all the shells even of our own native oysters. There is a relation between the pearl and the mother-of-pearl which naturalists will probably know more about by-

and-by than they seem to know now. Regarded commercially, there are many points of interest herein. The mother-of-pearl trade is prodigiously larger than that of pearls proper, in quantity if not in value. Birmingham alone finds employment for two thousand persons in cutting and working this substance. The quantity brought over varies from fifty to a hundred thousand pounds worth annually. Some of the shells are as large as the crown of a hat; and sometimes a workman is lucky enough to find a valuable pearl buried between the nacreous layers of the mother-of-pearl. The price of the best shells is from twelve to fifteen pounds per hundred-weight, and is rising on account of the briskness of the demand; but those which are yellowish in colour and deficient in lustre are purchasable at a much lower rate. It is among the manufacturing traditions of Birmingham that, once upon a time, a particular kind of shell went so utterly out of use as to have no market-price at all; that a dealer buried a considerable quantity because he could not sell them; and that he dug them up some years afterwards when a change of fashion led to a demand, and made his fortune. Sheffield, too, uses an immense quantity of mother-of-pearl, for the handles of penknives and other cutlery.

A kind of mussel found on the coasts of the Highlands yields what are known as Scotch pearls; but these have a dull and leaden appearance. The Chinese have a cunning way of putting little bronze images of Buddha inside a large pearl-mussel shell; the fish covers the images with its nacreous coating; and the Chinese then sell these pearly Buddhas as curiosities. From these inferior qualities upwards, the gradations of value are excessively numerous. The Panama pearls are long and drop-shaped, blackish or brownish in tint; those of India and Persia are finer. Unless a pearl is symmetrically pear-shaped, so as to show all its beauty as a pendent, the more spherical it is, the higher it is valued. The price of pearls varies even more rapidly than that of diamonds. They may be as low as ten guineas per ounce—they may be as high as ten guineas per grain; but if they are fine in shape and quality, and weigh more than a hundred grains each, there is no cut-and-dried rule for estimating their worth. The initiated talk of famous pearls as other connoisseurs do of famous Raffaelles and Titians; of the Marquis of Abercorn's great drop pearl; of the Crown-Princess of Prussia's pearl necklace; of the still finer one possessed by the Empress Eugénie; of the costly specimen presented some years ago to Queen Victoria by the East India Company. When the French Directory ordered the crown jewels to be valued in the early days of the Revolution, one pearl was set down at eight thousand guineas, and two others at six thousand each. Philip the Fourth, of Spain, had a pearl so famous that it had a name for itself—*la Peregrina*. The Imaum of Muscat is credited with the possession of a pearl worth thirty thousand pounds;

the Shah of Persia with one worth sixty thousand. As to Cleopatra's eighty thousand pounds pearl, an ingenious experimenter has calculated that the quantity of vinegar necessary to dissolve a pearl of that size would have infallibly choked the voluptuous empress.

THE LATE MR. STANFIELD.

EVERY Artist, be he writer, painter, musician, or actor, must bear his private sorrows as he best can, and must separate them from the exercise of his public pursuit. But it sometimes happens, in compensation, that his private loss of a dear friend represents a loss on the part of the whole community. Then he may, without obtrusion of his individuality, step forth to lay his little wreath upon that dear friend's grave.

On Saturday, the eighteenth of this present month, CLARKSON STANFIELD died. On the afternoon of that day, England lost the great marine painter of whom she will be boastful ages hence; the National Historian of her speciality, the Sea; the man famous in all countries for his marvellous rendering of the waves that break upon her shores, of her ships and seamen, of her coasts and skies, of her storms and sunshine, of the many marvels of the deep. He who holds the oceans in the hollow of His hand had given, associated with them, wonderful gifts into his keeping; he had used them well through threescore and fourteen years; and, on the afternoon of that spring day, relinquished them for ever.

It is superfluous to record that the painter of "The Battle of Trafalgar," of the "Victory being towed into Gibraltar with the body of Nelson on Board," of "The Morning after the Wreck," of "The Abandoned," of fifty more such works, died in his seventy-fourth year, "Mr." Stanfield.—He was an Englishman.

Those grand pictures will proclaim his powers while paint and canvas last. But the writer of these words had been his friend for thirty years; and when, a short week or two before his death, he laid that once so skilful hand upon the writer's breast and told him they would meet again, "but not here," the thoughts of the latter turned, for the time, so little to his noble genius, and so much to his noble nature!

He was the soul of frankness, generosity, and simplicity. The most genial, the most affectionate, the most loving, and the most lovable of men. Success had never for an instant spoiled him. His interest in the Theatre as an Institution—the best picturesqueness of which may be said to be wholly due to him—was faithful to the last. His belief in a Play, his delight in one, the ease with which it moved him to tears or to laughter, were most remarkable evidences of the heart he must have put into his old theatrical work, and of the thorough purpose and sincerity with which it must have been done. The writer was very intimately associated with him

in some amateur plays; and day after day, and night after night, there were the same unquenchable freshness, enthusiasm, and impressibility in him, though broken in health, even then.

No Artist can ever have stood by his art with a quieter dignity than he always did. Nothing would have induced him to lay it at the feet of any human creature. To fawn, or to toady, or to do undeserved homage to any one, was an absolute impossibility with him. And yet his character was so nicely balanced that he was the last man in the world to be suspected of self-assertion, and his modesty was one of his most special qualities.

He was a charitable, religious, gentle, truly good man. A genuine man, incapable of pretence or of concealment. He had been a sailor once; and all the best characteristics that are popularly attributed to sailors, being his, and being in him refined by the influences of his Art, formed a whole not likely to be often seen. There is no smile that the writer can recall, like his; no manner so naturally confiding and so cheerfully engaging. When the writer saw him for the last time on earth, the smile and the manner shone out once through the weakness, still: the bright unchanging Soul within the altered face and form.

No man was ever held in higher respect by his friends, and yet his intimate friends invariably addressed him and spoke of him by a pet name. It may need, perhaps, the writer's memory and associations to find in this a touching expression of his winning character, his playful smile, and pleasant ways. "You know Mrs. Inchbald's story, Nature and Art?" wrote THOMAS HOOD, once, in a letter: "What a fine Edition of Nature and Art is STANFIELD!"

Gone! And many and many a dear old day gone with him! But their memories remain. And his memory will not soon fade out, for he has set his mark upon the restless waters, and his fame will long be sounded in the roar of the sea.

OLD STORIES RE-TOLD.

EMMETT'S INSURRECTION.

IN 1803, the year after the discovery of Colonel Despard's conspiracy in England, Robert Emmet, the son of a Dublin physician, an impulsive young enthusiast, who had been for some years in voluntary exile in France, returned to Ireland with the purpose of initiating a second insurrection. Robert's elder brother, Thomas, a barrister, also an exile, and also eager for Irish independence, had met him at Amsterdam, and filled him with delusive hopes.

"If I get ten counties to rise," the dreamer said to a friend, "ought I to go on?"

"You ought if you get five, and you will succeed," was the answer.

Emmet was a handsome, sanguine, high-spirited, eloquent young man, of fine talents, great energy, and chivalrous courage; but led away by impetuous passions to a belief in a palpable

impossibility. He had entered the Dublin University at sixteen, and had even then been notorious for his wild republicanism. Moore the poet mentions him as his colleague at a juvenile debating-club, and even then in great repute, not only for his learning and eloquence, but for the purity of his life and the grave suavity of his manner. The dangerous subjects propounded by these hot-headed young politicians were such as "whether an aristocracy or democracy is more favourable to the advancement of science and literature;" and "whether a soldier was bound on all occasions to obey his commanding-officer." The object of these stripling conspirators was to praise the French republic, and to denounce England by innuendo or open sedition. The students were fired by recollections of Plutarch's heroes and Plato's Utopia; there were often real wrongs enacting before their eyes; their own fathers and brothers had been slain or hung; and, looking across the water, they could see French sympathisers stretching out their hands with promises of aid. The conclusion of one of Emmet's boyish speeches shows how much of the William Tell there was even then in his heart:

"When a people advancing rapidly in knowledge and power," said the debating club orator, "perceive at last how far their government is lagging behind them, what then, I ask, is to be done in such a case? *Why, pull the government up to the people.*"

Next day Emmet was struck off the college roll, and the plotting publicans and farmers were glad of a gentleman leader.

From a portrait of Emmet in later life, we can picture him in '98 with his tall ascetic figure, his long Napoleonic face, and his thin, soft hair brushed down over his high forehead. In 1802, care and thought had bent his brows into a too habitual frown, had compressed his lips, and turned down the outer angles of his mouth to a painful and malign expression; but still bend the brows or tighten the lips as time might, the face was always the face of a man of singular courage, and of acute though unbalanced genius.

There is a story told of this young politician in early life that proved his secretive power and resolution. He was fond of studying chemistry, and one night late, after the family had gone to bed, he swallowed a large quantity of corrosive sublimate in mistake for some acid cooling powder. He immediately discovered his mistake, and knew that death must shortly ensue unless he instantly swallowed the only antidote—chalk. Timid men would instantly have torn at the bell, roused all the family, and sent for a stomach-pump. Emmet called no one, made no noise; but, stealing down-stairs and unlocking the front door, went into the stable, scraped some chalk which he knew to be there, and took sufficient doses of it to neutralise the poison.

In 1798, when that self-willed and reckless but still generous and single-hearted young officer, Lord Edward Fitzgerald, commenced to conspire against the English government, the two

Emmets conspired with the United Irishmen, and Thomas, the barrister, was seized, with the other Leinster delegates. That seizure added the whole conspiracy as far as Dublin was concerned. Thomas Emmet said before the Secret Committee of Safety that he was sure that Lord Edward would have ceased to arm and discipline the people the moment that their wrongs were redressed, and force had become unnecessary. He denied that the conspirators had any intention of murdering the English judges and noblemen, they wished only to have held them as hostages for the conduct of England. At that same committee, Thomas Emmet told the Lord Chancellor boldly to his face that the '98 insurrection had been produced by the oppressive free quarters granted to the soldiers and yeomanry, the burning of houses, the tortures, and the military executions in the counties of Kildare, Carlow, and Wicklow. There is no doubt that the cruelties of Vinegar Hill and Wexford led to retaliations almost as cruel. The yeomanry, half of them raw lads, flushed with newly acquired power, and savage because their families had either suffered or been in danger, were often brutal and ruthless; innocent persons were shot, and harmless persons were plundered. Juries were too eager to condemn; judges inclined always to death. The chance had come to bleed the rebels, and the lancet was keen and cut deep.

In the prisons, well-born and refined men like Thomas Emmet suffered cruelly. The cells were crowded and unhealthy, the jailers insolent and cruel. There was no discipline, and the thieves' orgie was interrupted only by the tolling of the death-bell. In such a den the brave wife of this sincere but misguided man immured herself for twelve months, refusing to go out unless dragged away by force; only once stealing out at night, and in disguise (by the connivance of the jailer's wife, whose rough nature she had softened by her tears), to visit a sick child, for whom her heart was almost breaking. The sufferings of his brother and his brother's wife no doubt increased Emmet's hatred to the existing government more even than all the sabrings and platoon firing in Wicklow and Wexford. The Union Bill passed in 1801, after Grattan's scornful and passionate invectives; and Lord Castlereagh's triumph and cold arrogance frenzied the United Irishmen, and drove such men as Emmet to believe in open insurrection as their only hope.

Wolf Tone had spoken highly of the talents of the Emmet family. He described Thomas Emmet as a man of a great and comprehensive mind and a warm heart, one who would adhere to his principles through all sacrifices, and even to death. Of another brother Grattan said: "Temple Emmet, before he came to the bar, knew more law than any of the judges on the bench; and he would have answered better both in law and divinity than any judge or bishop of the land." The heart of the young conspirator, fresh from exile, burned as he heard with perfect faith all the exaggerated stories of the recent Protestant cruelties. He

remembered the promises of the French plotters; he did not foresee that Napoleon was too selfish and too busy just then to do much for Ireland; money was scarce, merchants were timid, the peasantry was cowed and scared; the Presbyterians were incensed by the cruelties at Wexford, and the Catholics distrustful of the north. Ardent and impetuous, Emmet had returned, eager to draw the sword, about the same time, and probably in conjunction with, an Irish officer named Russell, who had been released from Fort George after the troubles of '98, on condition of his transporting himself out of his Majesty's dominions, and who had now returned with a secret French commissioner as general-in-chief.

This Russell was a religious enthusiast, a wild interpreter of prophecies. He was to head an insurrection in Down and Antrim contemporaneously with a landing of the French in Scotland and with Emmet's seizure of Dublin Castle.

To other motives for ambition Robert Emmet now (in 1803) added the strongest of any. He fell in love, with all the passion of his vehement nature; he had won the heart of a daughter of that great forensic orator, Curran. Mr. Curran was irresolute in the cause of the United Irishmen, and he did not share in the dreams of the handsome young enthusiast. The prairie was ready to light, but the fire had still to be put. The lives of thousands of rash men were dependent on the momentary caprice of this fugitive, who, led away by enthusiasm, would have seen ten thousand men fall dead by his side, nor have felt a moment's regret, if he could only have planted the green flag and the "Sunburst" on the walls of Dublin Castle, and have filled its cellars with English prisoners. The one idea had grown dominant, and he had now braced himself to make the Curtius' leap. On his first return he had taken the name of Hewitt, and hidden himself in the house of a Mrs. Palmer, at Harold's Cross. There he corresponded with the leading conspirators, and sketched out his rough plans. On the 24th of March, 1803, he went with a Mr. Dowdall, who had been formerly secretary to the Whig Club, and contracted for a house at a place called Butterfield-lane, near Rathfarnham. But their mysterious and stealthy movements soon exciting suspicion, and the spot not being central enough, they soon left there. About the end of April, when Ireland's meadows began "the wearing of the green" more luxuriantly and rebelliously than ever, Emmet's friends took for their young leader a roomy malt-house in Marshal's-alley, Thomas-street, which had been long unoccupied. It was a retired place, the space was ample, above all, it was central and near the heart of the city, at which the first desperate blow was to be struck. There he lodged, while men were forging pike-heads, moulding cartridges, running bullets, stitching green and scarlet-faced uniforms, hemming green flags, and filling rocket-cases—taking only a few hurried hours of sleep on a mattress, when, exhausted in mind and body, he sank back amid the clang of the ham-

mers and the clatter and exultation of twenty hard-working associates. In one dépôt alone this indefatigable conspirator had accumulated forty-five pounds of cannon-powder, eleven boxes of fine powder, one hundred bottles quilted with musket-balls and bound with canvas, two hundred and forty-six ink-bottles filled with powder and encircled with buck-shot, to be used as hand-grenades, sixty-two thousand rounds of ball-cartridge, three bushels of musket-balls, heaps of tow mixed with tar and gunpowder for burning houses, twenty thousand pikes, bundles of sky-rockets for signals, and many hollow beams filled with combustibles. The arms were stored in various dépôts through the city, but chiefly in Mass-lane and Marshal's-alley. The White Bull Inn, in Thomas-street, was a haunt of the conspirators, and there tailors and other workmen were made drunk, decoyed to the dépôt, and forced to lend their aid. Spies and suspected persons found lurking near the dépôts were lured in and detained. The volcano would soon burst out, the hidden fires were already foaming upwards towards the surface.

When already the police agents were beginning to have glimpses of danger, and to patrol the bridges and quays of Dublin armed, an accident had almost betrayed Emmet's plans. An explosion took place at one of the dépôts in Patrick-street during the manufacture of some gunpowder. Those who know the recklessness of the lower orders of Irish, especially under excitement, may easily guess the cause of the accident. Some of the workmen, in the absence of their foreman, would smoke over a barrel of gunpowder, or some of the rebel smiths would hammer at the red-hot pike-heads, and drive the sparks to where their comrades were filling rocket-cases. The half-drunken rebels were suddenly astonished by a burst of flame and a roar of momentary thunder. One man, in dashing up to a window to escape suffocation, gashed open an artery in his arm, fell back, and bled to death. A companion was taken prisoner by the police, who instantly rushed in. Luckily, however, for Emmet, Major Sirr and the Dublin police, over-secure, were pacified by lies and misrepresentations, and the government took no alarm. The levees at the Castle went on as usual, though there were still rumours of a "rising" that made the Lord-Lieutenant order the patrols of certain stations to be doubled.

In the mean time, Robert Emmet was racked with fears and anxieties, and with sorrow for the recent loss of life (strange contradiction in a man who was about to send thousands to death). He dreaded detection just as the great enterprise was about to bear fruit. He moved now for the third time, hiding in the dépôt at Mass-lane. There, with feverish restlessness, he spent all day, urging on the blacksmiths and bullet-makers, and at night slept for an hour at a time, when exhausted, between the forge and the rocket-makers' table.

There were not yet more than eighty or a hundred conspirators actively engaged with Emmet, Dowdall, and Quigley, but these men

firmly believed all Dublin—nay, all Ireland—would rise when once they emerged from the *depôt*, and their young Hannibal had shouted in the streets the first “*Erin go bragh!*” There was too much of Hamlet about Emmet for such an enterprise as this; he had not the experience of men, or the power of command, requisite to conduct such a revolt. He was too sanguine, too credulous, too mild and tender-hearted, too trustful, too easily deceived by promises and pretences. He did not know how the nation had suffered in ’98, and how humbled it was since the defeats of that year. He was not one of those Cæsar-like beings who overrule other men’s wills, and magnetise all with whom they come into contact. Some of his associates, fearing discovery, proposed at once flying to arms; others thought action still premature. Seven days were spent in these debates; at last it was agreed to surprise the arsenals near the city, and take the Castle by a coup de main. As in ’98, the mail-coaches were also to be stopped on the same day, as a signal for the country to rise.

Imagine the feelings of this man, to-day a fugitive skulking from Major Sirr and his armed agents, to-morrow, as he thought to be, the patriot chief who was to restore liberty to Ireland! To-morrow the lover of Sarah Curran would clasp his beloved to his breast, and be greeted by her father as a conqueror and a victor. To-morrow England, France, Europe, the world, would know his name—the good and free to bless, the weak and wicked to curse and execrate it. In such a fever of conflicting passions, Emmet drew up an impetuous manifesto from “The Provisional Government to the People of Ireland.” It concluded thus:

“Countrymen of all descriptions! let us act with union and concert; all sects—Catholic, Protestant, Presbyterian—are equally and indiscriminately embraced in the benevolence of our object; repress, prevent, and discourage excesses, pillage, and intoxication; let each man do his duty, and remember that, during public agitation, inaction becomes a crime: be no other competition known than that of doing good; remember against whom you fight—your oppressors for six hundred years; remember their massacres, their tortures; remember your murdered friends, your burned houses, your violated females; keep in mind your country, to whom we are now giving her high rank among nations; and in the honest terror of feeling, let us all exclaim, that as, in the hour of her trial, we serve this country, so may God serve us in that which will be last of all!”

Towards dusk on the 23rd of July Emmet prepared for action. He put on a general’s uniform, green, laced with gold on the sleeves and skirts, and with gold epaulettes, white waistcoat and pantaloons, new boots, a cocked-hat with a white feather, a sash, a sword, and a case of pistols. About fifty men had assembled outside the *depôt*; to these men Emmet distributed pikes and ammunition. In a moment, as if by enchantment, all the streets and alleys leading to

Mass-lane and Thomas-street swarm with ruffians clamouring for arms, filling cartouch-boxes, pouches, bags, and pockets, loading muskets, shaking links and torches, and waving swords and green flags. Already the narrow street near the rebel *depôt* is one close-wedged bristling mass of pikes, and into the dusky summer night air spring every now and then signal-rockets, that burst into showers of starry fire. The men are flushed with whisky, and make the dingy houses ring with their shouts and shrieks of delight as Emmet, dark and determined-looking like the young Napoleon at the Bridge of Lodi, slashes the air with his sword and waves his white-plumed hat. In Dirty-lane the insurgents, already numbering five hundred or more, fire off their blunderbusses and pistols, heedless of alarming the garrison they were intent on surprising.

One of Emmet’s own coadjutors describes this moment very vividly:

“About six o’clock, Emmet, Malachy, one or two others, and myself, put on our green uniform, trimmed with gold lace, and selected our arms. The insurgents, who had all day been well plied with whisky, began to prepare for commencing an attack upon the Castle; and when all was ready, Emmet made an animated address to the conspirators. At eight o’clock precisely we sallied out of the *depôt*, and when we arrived in Thomas-street the insurgents gave three deafening cheers.

“The consternation excited by our presence defies description. Every avenue emptied its curious hundreds, and almost every window exhibited half a dozen inquisitive heads, while peaceable shopkeepers ran to their doors, and beheld with amazement a lawless band of armed insurgents, in the midst of a peaceable city, an hour at least before dark. The scene at first might have appeared amusing to a careless spectator, from the singular and dubious character which the riot wore; but when the rocket ascended and burst over the heads of the people, the aspect of things underwent an immediate and wonderful change. The impulse of the moment was self-preservation; and those who, a few minutes before, seemed to look on with vacant wonder, now assumed a face of horror, and fled with precipitation. The wish to escape was simultaneous; and the eagerness with which the people retreated from before us impeded their flight, as they crowded upon one another in the entrance of alleys, court-ways, and lanes, while the screams of women and children were frightful and heart-rending.

“‘To the Castle!’ cried our enthusiastic leader, drawing his sword, and his followers appeared to obey; but when we reached the market-house, our adherents had wonderfully diminished, there not being more than twenty insurgents with us.

“‘Fire the rocket!’ cried Malachy.

“‘Hold awhile,’ said Emmet, snatching the match from the man’s hand who was about applying it. ‘Let no lives be unnecessarily lost. Run back and see what detains the men.’

“Malachy obeyed; and we remained near

the market-house, waiting their arrival, until the soldiers approached."

The night was dark; the excitement along the quays, in the swarming "Liberty," and below the Castle, was tremendous. There is no excitement so wild as Irish excitement. Bands of pikemen were marching to various points of the city, and others were rushing, open-mouthed, to the depôts for arms and powder. Already drums were beating at the Castle and in the various barrack-yards, and patches of scarlet were moving towards the spot where rockets were sprung and guns discharged.

That night Lord Kilwarden, chief justice of the King's Bench, an amiable and just old lawyer, who had never lent himself to such ruthless severities as Lord Norbury and other partisans, had smilingly dressed at his country-house, and, trim, powdered, and in full evening dress, handed his daughter, Miss Wolfe, into his carriage, and with his nephew, a clergyman, driven cheerful and chatty to a party at the Castle. All the stories of this good and worthy man redound to his credit. In 1795, when he was attorney-general, a number of striplings and boys were indicted for high treason. The poor lads appeared in court wearing those open collars and frilled tuckers made familiar to us by Gainsborough's pictures. As Kilwarden entered the court, the Jeffreys of that day called out brutally:

"Well, Mr. Attorney, I suppose you are ready to go on with the trials of these tuckered traitors?"

Generously indignant and disgusted at hearing such language from the representative of divine justice, Kilwarden replied:

"No, my lord, I am not ready."

Then, stooping down to the prisoners' counsel, he whispered:

"If I have any power to save the lives of these boys, whose extreme youth I did not before know, that man shall never have the gratification of passing sentence upon a single one of these tuckered traitors."

The large-hearted man was as good as his word. He procured pardons for all the prisoners on condition of their voluntarily expiating themselves. One lad alone obstinately refused to accept pardon on such a condition, and was tried, convicted, and executed.

The relatives of that unhappy boy persisted in considering their kinsman as an especial selected victim, and swore vengeance against the good old judge. On this unfortunate summer night the carriage got embedded in the mob; the pikemen soon closed round it; pistols and blunderbusses were held to the head of the powdered coachman, sunk deeper than usual into his seat with fear, and at the heads of the footmen clustering behind. There was a murderous cry, and a pikeman named Shannon tore open the door of the carriage. It was Shannon, a relation of the boy who would be hanged.

"It is I, Kilwarden, chief justice of the King's Bench!" the old nobleman blandly cries, as he tried to calm the fears of his frightened daughter.

"Then you're the man I want," roars Shannon, and digs his pike into the old lord's chest. Before it is withdrawn, half a dozen other weapons meet in the old man's body, and he is trampled underfoot. His daughter, alone and unattended, breaks through the pitying crowd, and is the first to enter the Castle, and sobbingly relate the horrors of that cruel night. Kilwarden's nephew was pursued and piked.

Many other murders, equally useless, equally unjust, are perpetrated that night. The savage, half-drunken pikemen, without commander—for Emmet had no power over them, and they were now split up into parties by the soldiers—murdered every suspicious and obnoxious person they met. A police-officer and John Hanlan, the Tower-keeper, were two of the victims. Colonel Brown, a man respected by all Dublin, was also brutally assassinated as, misled by the darkness, he was trying to join his regiment. Ignorant of the precise movement of the rebels, he got entangled in their chief masses, was struck down by a shot from a blunderbuss, and instantly chopped to pieces. All enemies and neutrals, of whatever rank, who were not murdered, had pikes thrust in their hands, and were compelled to follow the cruel madmen to face the English soldiers.

Emmet, an hour ago confident of success, now felt his utter powerlessness to tame the horrible Frankenstein which he had invoked. His men were scattered; an attack on the Castle was impossible. The people could not be rallied to it. They were only intent on murder in the streets, and were beset by police and soldiers wherever they collected. A few brave fellows, staunch as bulldogs, had flown at them, and were holding grimly on till the huntsmen could arrive. Mr. Edward Wilson, a police magistrate, with only eleven constables, had the courage to push on to Thomas-street, where three hundred pikemen instantly surrounded his small detachment. Undismayed, Mr. Wilson called to the rabble to lay down their arms, or he would fire. The rebels wavered, and muttered together; but one villain, savage at the threat, advanced, and stabbed the magistrate with a pike. Mr. Wilson instantly shot him dead, and his men fired a volley. The undisciplined Celts are always the same—furious in the onset, without fear and without thought; in the retreat impatient, fickle, and headlong. The rebels fell back confused over their dead, and opened right and left to let their men with fire-arms advance to the attack. Mr. Wilson then thought it time to retreat slowly towards the Coombe.

Lieutenant Brady was soon after equally venturesome with forty men of his regiment, the 21st Fusiliers. He subdivided his small force, and placed them in positions useful for keeping up a cross-fire. The soldiers were tormented by bottles and stones from every window, and by random sharpshooters from the alleys, yards, and entries, but they kept up a rolling and incessant fire till the pikemen at last broke, shouted, and fled. Lieutenant Coltman, of the 9th Foot, with only four soldiers and twenty-four yeomanry from the

barrack division in coloured clothes, also helped to clear the streets, and apprehend armed men or rebels seen firing. And now horses could be heard, sabres came waving down the street, bayonets moved fast and close, drums beat louder, and then the rebels were charged fiercely, and shot down wherever they resisted. Then they fled to the suburbs and to the mountains. Before twelve the insurrection was quelled.

Poor Emmet! so passed his dream away. The great bright bubble of his life's hope had melted into drops of human blood. He and about fourteen other armed men fled to the Wicklow mountains, and skulked about from farm-house to farm-house, from glen to crag, from valley to village. As the pursuit grew hotter, and the troops began to come winding round the Scalp, and scattering along the blue rocky mountain-roads, the fugitives separated, each to look after himself. Emmet could, it was said, have escaped in a friendly fishing-boat to France, but a wild impulse of love and reckless despair seized him. He turned back from the sea, and set his face towards Dublin, once more to clasp Sarah Curran in his arms, and bid her farewell for ever. He regained the disturbed city safely, and took up his quarters again in his old place of refuge at Harold's Cross, in the house of a clerk named Palmer. He was known there as Mr. Hewitt. He had planned a mode of escape, if any attempt at arrest should be made, by escaping from a parlour window into an out-house, and from thence getting into the fields. But an indefatigable pursuer was soon on Emmet's track. On the evening of the 25th of August, Major Sirr rode up to the house accompanied by a man on foot. Mrs. Palmer's daughter opened the door. Sirr instantly darted into the back parlour. There sat a tall young man, in a brown coat, white waistcoat, white pantaloons, and Hessian boots, at dinner with his landlady. Sirr instantly gave him into the custody of his man, and took the landlady in the next room to ask the stranger's name, as it was not in the list of inhabitants wafered on the door of the house according to law. While Sirr was absent, Emmet tried to escape, and the officer struck him down with the butt-end of his pistol. Sirr then went to the canal-bridge for a guard, placed sentries round the house, while he searched it, and planted a sentry over the prisoner. Emmet again escaping while Sirr was taking down the landlady's evidence, Sirr ran after him, and shouted to the sentinel to fire. The musket did not go off. Sirr then overtook the prisoner, who surrendered quietly, and on being apologised to for his rough treatment, said, "All is fair in war." At the Castle, Emmet at once acknowledged his name.

On the 31st of August, Emmet was tried and pleaded not guilty, but made no defence. Curran had sternly refused to defend his daughter's unhappy lover.

Mr. Plunket, who prosecuted for the Crown, said, in the opening of his speech,

"God and nature have made England and Ireland essential to each other; let them cling to each other to the end of time, and their united

affection and loyalty will be proof against the machinations of the world.

"And how was this revolution to be effected? The proclamation conveys an insinuation that it was to be effected by their own force, entirely independent of foreign assistance. Why? Because it was well known that there remained in this country few so depraved, so lost to the welfare of their native land, that would not shudder at forming an alliance with France, and therefore the people of Ireland are told, 'The effort is to be entirely your own, independent of foreign aid.' But how does this tally with the time when the scheme was first hatched—the very period of the commencement of the war with France? How does this tally with the fact of consulting in the dépot about co-operating with the French, which has been proved in evidence?

"So much, gentlemen, for the nature of this conspiracy, and the pretexts upon which it rests. Suffer me for a moment to call your attention to one or two of the edicts published by the conspirators. They have denounced, that if a single Irish soldier—or, in more faithful description, Irish rebel—shall lose his life after the battle is over, quarter is neither to be given or taken. Observe the equality of the reasoning of these promulgators of liberty and equality. The distinction is this: English troops are permitted to arm in defence of the government and the constitution of the country, and to maintain their allegiance; but if an Irish soldier, yeoman, or other loyal person, who shall not, within the space of fourteen days from the date and issuing forth of their sovereign proclamation, appear in arms with them—if he presumes to obey the dictates of his conscience, his duty, and his interest, if he has the hardihood to be loyal to his sovereign and his country—he is proclaimed a traitor, his life is forfeited, and his property is confiscated. A sacred palladium is thrown over the rebel cause—while, in the same breath, undistinguishing vengeance is denounced against those who stand up in defence of the existing and ancient laws of the country. For God's sake, to whom are we called upon to deliver up, with only fourteen days to consider of it, all the advantages we enjoy? Who are they who claim the obedience? The prisoner is the principal. I do not wish to say anything harsh of him; a young man of considerable talents, if used with precaution, and of respectable rank in society, if content to conform himself to its laws. But when he assumes the manner and the tone of a legislator, and calls upon all ranks of people, the instant the provisional government proclaim in the abstract a new government, without specifying what the new laws are to be, or how the people are to be conducted and managed, but that the moment it is announced the whole constituted authority is to yield to him—it becomes an extravagance bordering upon frenzy; this is going beyond the example of all former times. If a rightful sovereign were restored, he would forbear to inflict punishment upon those who submitted to the

king de facto; but here there is no such forbearance—we who have lived under a king, not only de facto, but de jure in possession of the throne, are called upon to submit ourselves to the prisoner, to Dowdall, the vagrant politician, to the bricklayer, to the baker, the old-clothes-man, the hodman, and the ostler. These are the persons to whom this proclamation, in its majesty and dignity, calls upon a great people to yield obedience, and a powerful government to give 'a prompt, manly, and sagacious acquiescence to their just and unalterable determination!' 'We call upon the British government not to be so mad as to oppose us.'

"Gentlemen, I am anxious to suppose that the mind of the prisoner recoiled at the scenes of murder which he witnessed, and I mention one circumstance with satisfaction—it appears he saved the life of Farrell; and may the recollection of that one good action cheer him in his last moments. But though he may not have planned individual murders, that is no excuse to justify his embarking in treason, which must be followed by every species of crimes. It is supported by the rabble of the country, while the rank, the wealth, and the power of the country is opposed to it. Let loose the rabble of the country from the salutary restraints of the law, and who can take upon him to limit their barbarities? Who can say he will disturb the peace of the world, and rule it when wildest? Let loose the winds of heaven, and what power less than omnipotent can control them?"

Emmet bowed to the court with perfect calmness, and addressed it with fervid and impetuous eloquence. He said:

"My lords,—What have I to say that sentence of death should not be passed on me according to law? I have nothing to say that can alter your predetermination, nor that will become me to say, with any view to the mitigation of that sentence which you are here to pronounce, and I must abide by. But I have that to say which interests me more than life, and which you have laboured (as was necessarily your office in the present circumstances of this oppressed country) to destroy—I have much to say, why my reputation should be rescued from the load of false accusation and calumny which has been heaped upon it. I do not imagine that, seated where you are, your minds can be so free from impurity as to receive the least impression from what I am going to utter. I have no hopes that I can anchor my character in the breast of a court constituted and trammelled as this is. I only wish, and that is the utmost I expect, that your lordships may suffer it to float down your memories untainted by the foul breath of prejudice, until it finds some more hospitable harbour to shelter it from the storm by which it is at present buffeted.

"Were I only to suffer death, after being adjudged guilty by your tribunal, I should bow in silence, and meet the fate that awaits me without a murmur; but the sentence of the law, which delivers my body to the executioner, will, through the ministry of that law, labour, in

its own vindication, to consign my character to obloquy; for there must be guilt somewhere,—whether in the sentence of the court or in the catastrophe, posterity must determine. A man in my situation, my lords, has not only to encounter the difficulties of fortune, and the forces of power over minds which it has corrupted or subjugated, but the difficulties of established prejudice. The man dies, but his memory lives; that mine may not perish—that it may live in the memory of my countrymen—I seize upon this opportunity to vindicate myself from some of the charges alleged against me. When my spirit shall be wafted to a more friendly port—when my shade shall have joined the bands of those martyred heroes who have shed their blood on the scaffold and in the field, in defence of their country and virtue, this is my hope—I wish that my memory and name may animate those who survive me, while I look down with complacency on the destruction of that perfidious government which upholds its domination by blasphemy of the Most High; which displays its power over man as over the beasts of the forest; which sets man upon his brother, and lifts his hand, in the name of God, against the throat of his fellow who believes or doubts a little more than the government standard—a government steeled to barbarity by the cries of the orphans and the tears of the widows which it has made."

[Here Lord Norbury interrupted Mr. Emmet, observing, that mean and wicked enthusiasts, who felt as he did, were not equal to the accomplishment of their wild designs.]

He then avowed his belief that there was still union and strength enough left in Ireland to one day accomplish her emancipation. He sternly rebuked Lord Norbury for his cruel and unjust efforts to silence him, and repudiated his calumnies. He denied that he had sought aid from the French except as from auxiliaries and allies, not as from invaders or enemies.

"I have been charged," he said, "with that importance in the efforts to emancipate my countrymen as to be considered the keystone of the combination of Irishmen, or, as your lordship expressed it, 'the life and blood of the conspiracy.' You do me honour over-much—you have given to the subaltern all the credit of a superior. There are men engaged in this conspiracy who are not only superior to me, but even to your own computation of yourself, my lord; before the splendour of whose genius and virtues I should bow with respectful deference, and who would think themselves disgraced to be called your friend, and who would not disgrace themselves by shaking your blood-stained hand.

[Again the judge interrupted him.]

"What, my lord! shall you tell me on the passage to that scaffold which that tyranny, of which you are only the intermediary executioner, has erected for my murder, that I am accountable for all the blood that has and will be shed in this struggle of the oppressed against the oppressor; shall you tell me this, and shall I be so very a slave as not to repel it?"

"I do not fear to approach the Omnipotent

Judge, to answer for the conduct of my whole life; and am I to be appalled and falsified by a mere remnant of mortality? By you, too, who, if it were possible to collect all the innocent blood that you have shed in your unhallowed ministry in one great reservoir, your lordship might swim in it.

[Here the judge interfered.]

"If the spirits of the illustrious dead participate in the concerns and cares of those who are dear to them in this transitory life—O ever dear and venerable shade of my departed father, look down with scrutiny upon the conduct of your suffering son, and see if I have even for a moment deviated from those principles of morality and patriotism which it was your care to instil into my youthful mind, and for which I am now about to offer up my life.

"My lords, you are impatient for the sacrifice—the blood which you seek is not congealed by the artificial terrors that surround your victim, it circulates warmly and untroubled through the channels which God created for nobler purposes, but which you are bent to destroy, for purposes so grievous that they cry to heaven. Be ye patient! I have but a few words more to say. I am going to my cold and silent grave—my lamp of life is nearly extinguished—my race is run—the grave opens to receive me, and I sink into its bosom! I have but one request to ask at my departure from this world, it is the charity of its silence! Let no man write my epitaph; for as no man who knows my motives dare now vindicate them, let not prejudices or ignorance asperse them. Let them and me repose in obscurity and peace, and my tomb remain uninscribed, until other times and other men can do justice to my character. When my country takes her place among the nations of the earth, then, and not till then, let my epitaph be written. I have done!"

The judge was remorseless and the government was stern. Emmet suffered the penalty for high treason in Thomas-street, the very day after the trial. He ascended the scaffold with a calm resignation and an unswerving courage. He avowed himself a sceptic. To Dr. Dobbin, who importuned him as they rode together in a hackney-coach to the place of execution, he said:

"Sir, I appreciate your motives, and thank you for your kindness, but you merely disturb the last moments of a dying man unnecessarily. I am an infidel from conviction, and no reasoning can shake my unbelief."

Curran, when he defended Owen Kirwan, the tailor of Plunket-street, derided the rebellion of Emmet as a mere riot, but there can be no doubt that if the first hundred pikemen had made a rush at the Castle they might have seized that stronghold, and drawn on themselves a later but an equally certain destruction, after much bloodshed and murder. The Fenians now talk of Emmet as "rash and soft," but Englishmen can only pity a young and enthusiastic genius, whose dirge Moore sung with such pathos:

She is far from the land where her young hero sleeps,

and lament that such a gallant spirit should have squandered itself on such mischievous chimeras.

WILL THE PUBLIC STRIKE?

ONE can hardly take up a newspaper in these days, without reading that the members of some trade, or the followers of some particular branch of industry, have set up a strike. A strike, though doubtless at times necessary, is always inconvenient; inconvenient to the public, inconvenient to the employers, who are losing money during every hour of its continuance—losing by non-execution of orders, by rent and taxes, by machinery getting out of order, and the like; inconvenient to the wives of the strikers, who, with a reduced weekly income, have to provide for family wants, and for those juvenile appetites which never strike; inconvenient in respect of the aggravation—for such it is, even to wives not destitute of conjugal affection—of having the goodman about the house all day, "hanging about." That the strikers themselves are sufferers must be admitted, though in a minor degree compared with the persons against whom the strikers combine. These last are often so grievously put to it that they will concede much to bring the infliction to an end, and will sometimes even give in before the mere threat of a strike.

Seeing how great is the efficacy of some strikes, and what prodigious results are brought about by such organisations, I am induced, with a sense of the wrongs which are being inflicted on a large section of my fellow-creatures strong upon me, to propose a strike to the Public. If I am able to prove that we, the component members of that noun of multitude, are, in relation to a certain matter, injured and hopeless of redress, perhaps I may induce the Public to turn out.

I assert that we are injured in a degree which justifies the adoption of an extreme course, by all those persons, be they members of companies, agencies, or whatever else, who profess to provide omnibus accommodation—that I should call it accommodation!—for the inhabitants of London. To find a London omnibus an "accommodation," a man must have been brought very low. Chill penury must have "repressed his noble rage" till there has come to be less spirit left in him than in the proverbial worm. The frequenter of omnibuses is trodden upon, but does not turn.

This is the man who may be seen on a very wet day working his way down a long street at right angles to that by which his own peculiar omnibus travels, and who, just when he is still out of hailing distance, sees his vehicle, with plenty of room in it, rattle by at a smart pace, the conductor not even looking his way. The next omnibus is full, or it may be that there is just room for one: in which case the gentleman who conducts, and who is in a hurry, will accelerate the introduction of the new comer into the vehicle by a

friendly, but not respectful, push from behind: after administering which he promptly shuts the door to prevent him from tumbling out again, and the omnibus dashes on. To the unfortunate who has been thus unceremoniously abandoned to his fate, the aspect of affairs is not encouraging. His first instinct is to find something to seize, with a view to the preservation of his equilibrium; but this is unhappily one of those omnibuses which has not even got the poor accommodation of a rail running along the inside of the roof for struggling wretches to grasp at. Desperate, he clutches at anything—an old lady's bonnet—the features of a sleeping infant. Like a drowning man, he would grasp at one of the straws which are entwined about his feet, if it were suspended from the top of the vehicle. Staggering and clutching, he looks around. To all appearance the omnibus is full. It looks full. The old inhabitants take no notice of him. They talk to each other. They look out of window. The new comer is reduced to counting heads to ascertain on which side he may be permitted to burrow at the coveted plush. Both sides look equally crammed, but he counts and learns his fate. There are six little people on one side, and five giants, male and female, on the other. His lot is cast among these last. With that instinctive knowledge of physiognomy which belongs to the wretched, he detects the weakest looking among the five, and trampling onwards, with the wet skirts (for it is a rainy day) of the female omnibus-riders clinging to his legs, he at last reaches the spot, and, turning himself about, manages to wedge himself between the individual towards whom his instincts have led him, and this person's next neighbour: a lady of a less accommodating mood, who gathers up her draperies with a scowl, as if she grudged our poor wretch this inestimable privilege of a ride in an omnibus, and thought it a luxury to which the creature had no right. The omnibus has not been in motion two minutes, by the way, when this lady discovers that she has been conveyed past her destination, and a scene of much confusion ensues.

It must be acknowledged that, to a man of at all an irritable fibre, the aggravations which attach to omnibus-travelling are sufficiently numerous; and it must further be admitted, that the ladies who patronise this mode of locomotion are answerable for a great many of them. The lady who rides in omnibuses has many very trying ways. She gets into an omnibus at Mile-end-gate, and in five minutes after the time when that cheerful spot has been left behind, she begins hooking and poking at everybody within reach with her umbrella, in order that the information may at once be conveyed to the conductor that she wishes to be put down at the Marble Arch. Whenever the conveyance stops in its progress westward through the City, she takes the opportunity of reminding the official on the step about that dreadful gateway, besides stopping the vehicle two or three times, when panic-stricken by a conviction that she has been carried past the structure in question without knowing it.

And then, when at length she does arrive at her destination, she is never ready with the money for her fare. The progress of the omnibus is delayed while she stands on the step or in the roadway searching for her purse, which, when at last found, seems to contain nothing but half-crowns, certain to take a long time in the changing, even if there was no dispute about the fare, which in these cases there invariably is. Sometimes these amiable creatures, when by their own mistake they have got into a wrong omnibus, and have ridden several miles in ignorance of that fact, will decline to pay at all, arguing that they have been sufficiently injured in having been brought all that way out of their road, without having to pay for it as well.

But it is less with the aggravations for which our fellow-travellers are responsible, than with the miseries which are solely referable to those who provide the inhabitants of London with omnibus accommodation, that we are now concerned. Troublesome and selfish individuals will ride in omnibuses, and in other conveyances also, to the end of time; what omnibus proprietors have to do, is to take such measures as shall render the said troublesome and selfish persons as little noxious as may be.

What we propose to strike for, first of all, is more space. We demand that that lane of legs, up and down which we have to travel in getting in or out of an omnibus, shall be a wider lane. This is indispensable. The vicious struggle and leg-conflict which goes on in that arena between the two rows of seats on each side of a modern omnibus, is no longer to be borne, and the time is at hand when mankind will hardly believe that any such savage state of things was tolerated by people calling themselves civilised. If omnibus proprietors choose to give additional length at the same time to their vehicles, and so to accommodate a greater number of passengers, there is nothing to prevent them from doing it. It would, no doubt, necessitate the employment of additional horse-power; but if by the use of a third horse more seats can be provided for the use of the public, the owners of these "metropolitan stage-carriages," as they are formally called, would be no losers by the change.

Another thing pre-eminently needed, if the insides of our omnibuses are to be rendered tolerably comfortable, is a subdivision of the seats into compartments such as we find in the stalls of a theatre. By this arrangement, every individual would be secured against encroachment, a vast deal of squeezing and crushing would be avoided, and the traveller would be able, on entering the carriage, to see at a glance where there is a vacant space, and to make for it. Each of these stalls, except those nearest to the door, should be provided with some means of communication with the guard, so that the inhabitant may not be reduced to the undignified necessity of hooking at an unattainable conductor with an umbrella not long enough to reach him.

One more specification. We require some notification to be put up, in a conspicuous place

outside the omnibus, how many vacant places there are inside. When there are more such vacancies than four, no such notification would be required; but when there is only one, or when there are only two, three, or four places empty, it is much needed. An omnibus is often stopped, to the inconvenience of those within it, by two or three persons, who wish to ride together, and there is often a long delay while the conductor explains that there is only room for one, or two. The friends decline to be parted, and, shaking their heads indignantly, retire to the pavement to wait for the next 'bus; but, in the mean while, time has been lost, and the horses have had it "taken out of them," by a pull up and a fresh start, which the poor beasts always feel very keenly.

Surely these demands are few and simple enough: increased width; seats divided into compartments; a means of communicating with the conductor; a board with a number on it. We do not ask for impossibilities. We do not press for the adoption of any of those fanciful designs which dreadful ingenious people have published from time to time, and from the adoption of which we are assured (by the designers) such comfort would flow that a ride in an omnibus would be a pleasure eagerly anticipated, instead of a necessity grudgingly encountered. We do not ask for such an omnibus as might run in the streets of a Utopia. A conveyance in almost all respects resembling this which we are asking for, may at this very time be seen in the streets of Paris, in the streets of Manchester, and even in a few districts of our own most backward metropolis. The thing can be done, then. But will it be done? Not unless some irresistible pressure is put upon those deadly enemies of ours, the omnibus proprietors. Of these purveyors of locomotion we, the Public, have had some amount of discouraging experience. Announcements of their benevolent intentions towards us have appeared before now. We were to have new vehicles, large and commodious, built upon new principles, replete with new comforts. Prizes have been offered for the best new design of a model omnibus. We were to have such a golden age, in the matter of omnibuses, that a man might travel by these vehicles without having all the worst passions of his nature stirred, and might even be expected to feel well-disposed towards his fellow-passengers, however numerous. This was the promise. What was the performance? A very few new omnibuses on a more commodious principle have been built, and kept running on certain lines, while the mass of these carriages have been left unaltered, or have only been improved in such trifling ways as are not worth mentioning—a couple of brass columns in the middle of each side-bench, or some loops of leather nailed along the inside of the roof for staggering intruders to grasp at.

If the Public would but strike, the thing would be done. If the public would only manage for a little while to do without omnibuses! It would be inconvenient, but consider the "cause." The old clerk who lives at Ham-

mersmith, and whose office is in the City, would have a difficulty in reaching his office-stool at nine o'clock in the morning; his wife or his daughters, when contemplating later in the day a shopping excursion to Messrs. Shoolbred's in Tottenham-court-road, would also be put to it a little. Still the thing might be managed. There must be a fund raised, of course. Persons with strong claims, such as the old gentleman mentioned above, must for the time be supplied with cab-fares. The ladies of his family must put off their shopping, or, for the nonce, deal with some neighbouring tradesman. Between cabs, and underground railways, and river-steamers—warm weather coming—and increased pedestrian exertions, and the greatest possible temporary curtailment of town locomotion generally, the thing might be managed, if the Public would only strike.

The Strike would not last long. Our natural enemies would soon be obliged to give in. What would our troubles and inconveniences be to theirs? Think of the horses. Not a few vicious, and only kept within bounds by incessant work. What would these animals be, after a week of idleness? Think, again, of the amount of food hebdomadally consumed by these quadrupeds. All the omnibus horses in London eating voraciously, and not bringing in a sixpence! They would get fat, too, and there would be a pretty state of things! A fat omnibus horse would be so abnormal a creature, that he might be expected to generate some new and terrible disease of the plethoric sort. Between the horses turned by idleness into rampagious demons, and those in which plethoric symptoms would be developed by the same cause, the "masters" would have such a time of it, that, before ten days of the Strike had elapsed, they would be ready to pacify us with gilded coaches and six, if we wanted them.

And if these, our oppressors, would find their horses too much for them, as they certainly would, what difficulties would they not have to encounter with their men! All the omnibus-drivers and conductors in London without occupation, let loose upon society at one fell swoop! These men are not a docile or easily managed race, nor are they, as a class, averse to strong waters. What rows there would be. What terrific combats between "Waterloos" and "Favourites," "Atlases" and "Red-Rovers." All the 'bus-drivers and conductors at enmity with one another, and with time heavy on their hands, and that slanging power, with which the members of their tribe are so wondrously gifted, in full force, they would lash each other up to such unheard-of states of fury, that very soon, after the manner of the Kilkenny cats, there would be nothing of any of them left but their badges.

Really, when one thinks of all the horrors and miseries which this proposed Strike would entail upon the class against which its force would be directed, the reflection is apt to produce a weak tendency to relent:—only to be counteracted by a rigorous and steady contemplation of the sufferings which our tor-

mentors have so long compelled us to endure. Let us remember, besides, that unless we Strike, and that quickly, not only may we expect that the existing collection of torture-chambers on wheels, will be kept running until in some remote age they tumble to pieces, but that, for aught we know to the contrary, more of those detestable vehicles may any day be put in course of manufacture. Let this thought stimulate afresh our flagging indignation, and make us determine that, come what may, and let the consequences be ever so terrible, we will turn out, Strike, and give no quarter, till our utmost demands are satisfied.

BRETON LEGENDS.

BRITTANY ought to be, to Englishmen in general, and to Welshmen in particular, the most interesting part of France. Ask an archaeologist why Little Britain in the City of London is so called. Read up Richard the Third again, and see how much the establishment of the Tudors, and therefore of the Stuarts, and therefore of the present reigning family, was owing to Breton help. We might call the Bretons the Welsh of France; though, when we read all about them in their own Emile Souvestre, who loved them, we might almost fancy the book to be a translation of Carleton's traits and stories. They are Welsh in disposition, Irish in religion; Welsh and Irish have (despite difference of creed) strong points in common; they have the same deep religious feeling—call it superstition if you please—and they have the same gloom, underlying a surface cheerfulness.

Brittany is the land whither (we are told) those Britons who could not brook Saxon rule, and for whom there was not room enough in Cornwall and Wales, fled to seek shelter among people of their own race. In Cornwall and Brittany the names of half the towns still imply identity of race. The very country name (Cornouailles) is that of one of the districts of the French province. Consider some of the names we have to deal with.

Karnac. The word has been a battle-cry in all the fiercely contested wars of Druid lovers against unbelieving antiquaries.

Armorica. "The land on the sea-board," actually an independent state from the time of Maximus, Gratian's rival, in 383, down all through the stormy middle ages (except for a while during the universal gloom of the tenth century, when it, too, yielded to the Northmen), right on to 1491, when heiress Anne married Charles the Eighth.

Then, again, Vannes. What memories does the name call up, of the old Veneti and their war with Cæsar, and their towns all built out into the sea, and their chain-cables, and their big ships, which went by sails instead of by oars like those of the Romans, and which were only beaten in their grand fight because the wind fell, and so they could not tack or move at all.

Take Hennebon, and think of Froissart

and Sir Walter Manny, noblest of free lances, and the brave countess, and her friend the widow of De Clisson. In Brittany then, there were as many fighting-women as in Scotland, when the Bruce was winning back his own.

And then Nantes and its later convictions, and crowds more of towns that live in history, though they don't make much noise in France just now. Think of a land so rich in memories,

Mr. Crawford has lately read a paper to prove that, as far as the structure of the language goes, the Welsh and Armorican have nothing to do with the Gael and Erse. What we say is that, while by race the Breton is very near of kin to the Welshman,* in feeling he oftener resembles the Irishman or Highlander. This is specially the case in all matters connected with religion and religious superstitions. The established church in Wales (though we do not often realise the fact) was for a long time in as bad a state as that in Ireland. There were non-resident or otherwise heedless dignitaries, and a pauperised clergy. Hence the people became Methodists almost universally; and so that peculiarly Celtic feeling which leads the small farmer in Scotland, or the Irish cottier, to train the bookish son for the university, found a vent in class-leadership, lay-preaching, and all the other devices whereby scope is afforded for the ministrations of men who do not (as in established Protestant churches, and in the Romish Church always) form, more or less, a class cut off from secular business. This feeling is still strong in Brittany. Every farmer is proud of having among his sons a kloarek (clericus), or lad reading for orders.

But, after all, either name will do. Your Welshman is as fond of a legend as your Irishman; for, of all races who have yet been anatomised by the ethnologist, none is such a faithful guardian of old traditions as the Celtic, whether you mean by that name, Highlander, Irishman, Welsh, Breton, one or all! Hence it is no wonder that, while from Auvergne we brought a true tale of human endurance and patient effort meeting its reward, from Brittany we begin with a fiction, having, no doubt, an excellent moral, but still a pure fiction. The story which follows, is one that reappears in many forms in the folk-lore of far distant lands. How strange is the travelling of a legend from far east even to remotest west; how characteristic are the stains it derives from different soils, the scraps of dress it gathers as it goes! Dunlop, years ago, and Dr. Dasent more recently, have traced the course of some of our popular tales most ingeniously.

The following is, par excellence, a Christian story: not but that the same idea occurs in heathen myths,† for men had hearts before Our Saviour came to give light to their spirits; but as Christianity gave greater weight to the kindly virtues, and taught men to look less

* The names of places (as Trequier) are constantly Cornish in form. But Lanillis (Llaneglys), church land, is (with multitudes more) pure Welsh.

† The Wanderings of Demeter contains the germ of the same idea.

to the outward appearance, we naturally find Christian legends giving more prominence to conduct like that of St. Martin to the beggar. The tale is called "The Three Meetings;" and runs thus :

In the old, old time, when there were as many holy hermitages in Lower Brittany as there are drinking-shops now, there were in the bishopric of Leon two young lairds, Tonyk and Mylio, who had lost their father when they were quite children. Their mother had them carefully taught, so that by the time Tonyk was fourteen and his brother sixteen, they knew as much as any priest, and might have taken orders if they had been old enough, and had had a call that way. Well, their mother thought it was time they should see something of the world, so giving each of them a new bonnet, a full purse, a purple cloak, and a horse, she sent them with her blessing to seek a very rich uncle, who lived a long way off. They went on and on at a great pace, till they came into quite another country, where neither the trees nor the corn were a bit like what they were used to round home; and there, by a wayside cross, they saw a poor woman sitting down and weeping bitterly, with her face covered with her apron. Tonyk stopped, and asked her what was the matter.

"I have lost my son," said she, sobbing, "and he was all I had to depend on; and now I've nothing to look to but charity of good Christian people."

Tonyk had his hand in his pocket, when his brother called out jeeringly :

"Don't you see that she's just sitting there, like a decoy-bird, to catch silly travellers."

"Peace, brother; you make her weep more bitterly still. Don't you see that, in height and age, she seems just like our mother, whom God protect."

Then, giving his purse to the poor woman, he whispered :

"I can do nothing else to help you, poor woman; but you shall have my prayers as well."

The beggar-woman took the purse, kissed it, and said :

"Young laird, since you have been so generous to me, be pleased to accept this nut. Inside it there is a wasp with a diamond sting."

Tonyk thanked her, put the nut in his pocket, and rode on.

By-and-by they came to the edge of a forest, where they saw a little child almost naked, searching about in the crevices of the trees, and singing a tune which they had never heard before, and which was strangely sad—far sadder than the music of the mass for the dead. He often stopped to clap his little ice-cold hands, singing, "I'm so cold, I'm so cold;" and the brothers heard his teeth chatter.

"Poor little thing," said Tonyk, "how he feels the wind!"

"He must be a very cold subject, then," retorted Mylio. "I find the wind very pleasant."

"But then see how you are dressed—velvet

waistcoat, cloth coat, and purple cloak over that."

"Ah, that's all very well, but he's used to it: he's only some labourer's child."

However, Tonyk stops, and asks the boy what he is doing.

"I'm looking for flying needles,"* said he; "I find them asleep in cracks in the trees, and when I get a lot of them, I shall take them down to the town and sell them, that I may buy a coat, to keep me always as warm as if the sun was shining."

"How many have you caught?"

"Only one, as yet." And the boy held up a little cage of rushes, in which he had imprisoned it.

"Well, here's a bargain. You take my cloak, and give me the fly; and remember every night to say an Ave for Mylio there, and one for our mother too."

The brothers went on. At first Tonyk felt the cold a great deal, but by-and-by, when they had got over the down, a ray of sun came out, and he was able to go on comfortably.

Then they came to a spring in a meadow; and by the side of it sat an old man in rags, with a wallet on his back. He began calling out piteously the moment he saw them.

"What do you want, father?" said Tonyk, touching his hat out of respect for the old man's years.

"Ah, my dear young gentleman, you see how old I am, and I'm so weak I can't walk at all. So I've nothing for it but to die here where I am, unless one of you will sell me his horse."

"Why, you old gaberlunzie," said Mylio, "I should like to know what you've got to pay with."

"Seest thou this hollow acorn," said the beggar; "there is a spider inside that can spin a web stronger than steel. Ye shall have spider and acorn in exchange for a horse."

Mylio burst into fits of laughter. "Just listen to that, brother; the old fellow must have a pair of calf's feet in his brogues" (*i.e.* must be an impudent fool).

Tonyk replied, "He can't offer more than he has got, you know. Here, old man, I give you my horse, not because of what you offer in return, but because Christ hath said the poor are blessed. Take it, and thank God, who has put it into my heart to give it you."

The old man makes the lad take his spider, and rides away; but Mylio, who had been getting more and more ill-humoured, bursts out and says :

"You idiot! I suppose you expect me to share purse and cloak and horse with you, but you're mistaken; you may just get on as best you can."

He trots off, and Tonyk plods on without one angry feeling against his brother.

But soon the road led through a narrow glen between steep mountains, which rose sheer up even to the clouds. It was called the "Dowie Loaning," because of an ogre who lived on one of the mountains, and watched for travellers. He was a blind giant, without any feet, but his

* The Breton name for the small dragon-fly.

ears were so sharp that he could hear the worm boring in the ground. He was waited on by two eagles, whom he sent out whenever he heard anybody come by. No one ever went by who could help it, and all who did go, took care to take off their shoes and tread on tiptoe, scarcely daring to breathe, till they were a long way on the other side.

So when Mylio came, trotting along, the ogre heard him miles off, and cried, "Come, my eagles, red and white; I must have that fine fellow for my supper."

Down swooped the eagles, and, catching Mylio by his cloak, flew up with him to the ogre's den.

Tonyk just came up in time to see his brother disappear in the clouds; but it was no use crying out, and when he looked at the mountain-side, as steep as any wall, it seemed hopeless to climb; so he knelt down and prayed Almighty God to save his brother.

"Don't trouble Him about such a trifle," said three strange little voices, which seemed to come from close by.

"Who spoke? Who and where are you?" cried he.

"Look in your pocket," replied the three voices.

The end of it was, that the spider begins to spin a ladder strong and polished like steel; it fastens one end to a tree, and, getting on the dragon-fly's back, is slowly carried up as the work goes on. Tonyk follows, the wasp buzzing round his head.

At last they get to the ogre's cave. He has Mylio ready trussed, and is cutting up fat bacon to fry him with, singing all the time:

I like the flesh of a Leon man,
He eats as much fat meat as he can;
The men of Trequir, too, will do for me,
They're fed on new milk and firmity;
But Cornwall people* and men of Vannes,
With their buckwheat bread, digest them who can?

The two eagles were getting the spit ready and making up the fire. So glad was the giant at the prospect of supper, that he went on singing without hearing Tonyk's footsteps. The red eagle first saw the intruder, and rushed at him, but the wasp stung him in both eyes with his diamond sting; he treated the white eagle in the same way, and then flew at the ogre, and began stinging him remorselessly about the head. He roared out like a mad bull, and kept swinging his arms like a wind-mill; but he could never touch the wasp, and having no feet, he could not run away. At last, in his agony, he threw himself, face downwards, on the ground; but the moment he had done so, the spider began to weave about him her wonderful web. He called his eagles, but they, seeing that his power was gone, fell upon him, and tore his flesh away piecemeal. Their treachery, however, did them no good; for when, full-fed, they lay down on the carcase, they presently burst asunder, for ogre's flesh is by no means wholesome fare.

Of course Tonyk untied his brother, and they went together to the edge of the rock. "How could they get down?" While they were pondering, the dragon-fly and wasp grew as big as horses, the little cage of rushes became a fine coach, the spider jumped up behind in full livery, and off they drove "along the way where the roads are always in good order."

They soon came to their uncle's castle. There, by the drawbridge, stood both their horses, and at Tonyk's saddle-bow hung his purse, grown seven times bigger, and his cloak all embroidered with diamonds. The lad turned round to ask what it all meant, when lo! instead of wasp, and spider, and fly, he saw three glorious angels, one of whom said:

"Fear not, good-hearted boy: the three whom you met were the Virgin Mary, the Saviour, and St. Joseph. Let what has happened be a life-long lesson to you both, and teach you what the Lord meant when He said: 'Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my little ones, ye have done it unto me.'"

After which words the angels spread their wings, and went up, singing, into heaven; and Mylio fell on his brother's neck, and confessed how much he had been in the wrong, and made promises and resolutions for the future.

But to turn for a while from the ideal to the real. What was the stuff of which our old British forefathers made their tartans? For we shall surely not give in to the base Roman calumny, so greedily adopted by the southron, that their summer wear was a light coat of blue paint, while in winter they had nothing better than wolf-skin or leather. Was it woollen or was it linen? We have Welsh flannel and Irish linen—though they tell us that the latter dates no further back than Orange-William's time, and was given by him instead of the old woollen—the frieze, of which our Princess Alexandra, God bless her! now wears a jacket, but of which the English protectionists of that day were jealous. As to Flemings in Wales, the North Welsh fabric—the "Welsh flannel" of commerce—was never learnt from them; while the less-known worsted stuff of South Wales, so like some of the coarser tweeds, is made chiefly in little mountain villages, where Fleming from Pembroke or Gower never reached. So that we incline to think woollen the original Celtic wear. The very word "flannel" is given by philologists as one of the very few belonging to the old language which still survive. The only difficulty is that in the whole of Armorica, probably, not a yard of flannel is manufactured. We all know how little there is of it in France in general; how it is recognised as a foreign, an English production; how that the surest way to win a French servant's gratitude is by the gift of an old flannel petticoat. In Brittany it is rarer still: among the people you scarcely ever find a blanket; even well-to-do farmers have often nothing but a coverlet of haircloth or coarse tow-yarn. Winter and summer the

* Cornouailles, the district.

poor wear nothing but linen. Linen manufactures exist (and used to thrive) everywhere, and large quantities of linen are still sent to Spain, and South America. Now, the story is (and there seems no reason to doubt it), that linen-weaving* was first brought in in the fifteenth century, by a Flemish lady, one of the De Quentins. However this may be, the following tale about the invention of the coarse and strong ticking, called ballin, made either of tow-yarn or else of refuse flax, and used for the purpose we have named, is accepted as authentic by the careful Breton antiquarian, M. Miorcé de Kerdannet.† It illustrates many pleasing features in Breton society, especially the bond between seigneur and peasant, which resisted all the force of the old revolution. It is comforting, too, to believe that Breton ladies in general knew their duty better than did that lovely and most unhappy wife of the Chateaubriand, whose sad story is told so touchingly in Miss Frere's *Life of Margaret d'Angoulême*.

"In the time of King Louis, the fourteenth of that name, the lord of Kerjean had the best as well as the loveliest wife who had ever been seen in all the country-side. If she was queen of beauty, she was also mother of the poor. From house to house she used to go, giving money and good advice; and, let me tell you, that these two do much better together than apart. The money makes poor folks attend to the advice, and the advice teaches them how to use the money. The great house was open to everybody, just like a church. Any one who could not get work had only to walk straight in; for the lady always had field-labour for the lads, something to do about the cow-house or laundry for the lasses, while the old people were set to spin flax, or, when that ran scarce, to work up into yarn the tow that was left from flax or hemp. Of course the linen and hempen thread was very useful; but even the lady, clever as she was, had never been able to make much of the tow-yarn; she just had it spun to give the old people something to do, and then it was thrown aside, so that there were lofts and lofts full of it about the castle."

Now Oliver, lord of Kerjean, loved his wife dearly, and trusted her in everything. He used to say his "better half" could never do wrong, and she (for she loved a joke) would answer that she never would play her husband false till the cock had flown off the church-tower.

King Louis had a way (more's the pity) of taking nobles and gentles off their land and away from their own people, and getting them up to Paris; so Lord Oliver had to go. He wanted to take his wife, but she begged hard to stay.

"Dear heart! what would become of all my orphans and my poor old spinning-women? Why, they've grown to look on the work I give

* Of Netherland origin, as many an old song testifies—

"His shirt was of the Holland fine."

† De Musset has based one of his pretty novelettes upon it.

them as a thing of course. Besides, if we both go, Oliver, we shall stay; but if you go alone, you can be sure to come back soon."

So the laird went up alone, begging his wife to write often, and to put the letters into my Lord Bishop of St. Pol's letter-bag, that they might be sure to go safely.

It took him sixteen days to drive to Paris; they could never get beyond a trot in those times, and had to stop at night for fear of the deep ruts.

Kerjean met a whole gathering of Breton lords and gentlemen at Paris, and was made much of by them and their French* friends; but these last wondered a good deal why he had not brought his wife. At last they agreed that she must be some country hoyden whom he was quite ashamed of, and perhaps as ugly as sin to boot. But the Bretons soon told them differently, and let them know that she was such an altogether lovely lady, that men had added one more line to the old country rhyme:

Kermavan for old blood;†

Penhoët for bravery,

Karman for wealth;

namely,

Kerjean for beauty.

Then the French lords, light of tongue after their manner, began to twit Kerjean with having left his wife at home for fear she should find in Paris some one more to her fancy. Oliver was for fighting them all round. He had two or three duels, but at last they laughed and argued him into sending one of them with a letter, begging Francéza to treat the bearer well, as he was her husband's best friend. So they sent Count d'Aiguillon, who had a terrible reputation among them, and Kerjean, who would much rather have run him through the body, was obliged to wish him a safe journey.

Well, at first D'Aiguillon thinks he is making way wonderfully. Francéza is so pure and good she cannot suspect evil in others, and so she rides with him to visit the gentry round, and listens to his nonsense of evenings, and laughs and laughs again when he tells her he's dying for her, and gives him the ribbon that she tied her hair up with, and lets him steal her brooch and a ring off her little finger. And at last, when he pressed her again and again for a meeting, she was silent and thoughtful awhile, and then said:

* The two are always distinguished from each other. In the *Gesta rerum Britannia*, by an Armorican poet, we read:

... *Gallis quos nostra Britannia victrix*
Sæpe molestavit.

The writer is still more uncomplimentary to the English:

... *genus Anglorum, stirps impia, natio fallax,*
Turba bibax, soboles mendax, populusque bilinguis.
Hence it appears that the French may go further back than the broken treaty of Kloster-seven for their title, "perfidé Albion."

† Like a certain Welsh family, they ignored Adam. There was nothing between them and the Creator: "*Les Kermavan et Dieu avant*" was their motto.

"Not in the hall, for the serving-men would see; nor in my bower, for the maid would be there; nor in the parlour, for it looks out on the terrace. But there's a little wood-house, you know, at the far end of the corridor; I will be there when all the lights are out."

So D'Aiguillon, rejoicing in his wicked heart, sent off his ribbon, and ring, and brooch to Paris, and wrote saying he should soon return triumphant. Then he dressed himself in his best, and made his way to the wood-house. He had a long while to wait, and many a time did he smooth his rich lace band and ruffles, and shake the scent out of his embroidered handkerchief, and practise his most killing look and most graceful attitude. At last he heard a light step, and saw a lantern in the distance. The door was open, he felt he was looking superlatively charming, when, with a quick movement, Françoise pulled the door to, double-locked it on the poor count, and cried, "There is your place, Sir Count, till Kerjean comes home again!"

The wood-house was filled, like most of the out-premises, with this tow-yarn, which, we said, the old people used to spin when there was nothing else to do. So, next day, Kerjean's wife came and opened the little slide in the door, and said, "Sir Count, we are none of us idle here. See, I have brought you tools; fall to, and weave for your dinner." At first the count stormed and raged, and swore revenge; but she was a resolute woman, though she had laughed at his nonsensical talk, and hunger soon tamed him, and at last he took to trying to weave in good earnest.

Meanwhile, the letter and parcel got to Paris, and you may well imagine how Kerjean looked when he read and saw. For a time he stood rooted to the spot and as pale as death, and then (without saying a word) he just ordered round his bright bay, which was the fastest horse in all Brittany (not to mention France), and off he went. The bay could sleep standing, and he slept in the saddle; he fed Pen-ru* himself, watching him every grain he ate, and the moment the last gram was eaten he clapped on the bridle, and was off again. So he rode day and night, and towards evening of the seventh day he got near home; but there had been a grievous storm, and the waters were out, and the church steeple had been struck and blown down. "Ah," thought he, "the cock on the tower has flown off at last!"

So he gave Pen-ru the spur unmercifully, and just got inside the oak avenue when the horse that had been lame some time broke down.

"There, Heaven help me, I've killed a faithful horse for a faithless woman."

Through the "wilderness," and by the garden, and up to the hall door, and in another minute his loud knocking roused the castle.

"That's Kerjean," said the lady, and ran to greet him. But he pushed her wildly aside.

"Where is D'Aiguillon, you false woman?"

"Come and see. I could not help it. I did the best I could. It was your fault for sending such a man here."

Kerjean sprang after her, and as they walked along the corridor they saw a light, and heard the noise of weaving.

"Listen how industrious he is," said the lady, laughing.

Her husband was puzzled. She bade him look through the little slide, and there, amid a great heap of tow-yarn, sat the count, weaving away as though his life depended on it.

"There," said Kerjean's wife; "at first my gentleman thought that he, a real gentleman, would be degraded by putting a finger to the work, but hunger pretty soon tamed him, and, lo and behold! after several trials he has somehow got to make a strong, warm kind of stuff, which I never saw before."

The count was so busy that he didn't hear them, till Kerjean burst into a fit of laughter at seeing Oliver's hat and sword lying on a bale of tow beside him. But courtiers in those days were used to treat the Seventh Commandment lightly, so our prisoner did not lose his presence of mind, though his smile was rather bitter as he said:

"I've lost my bet, M. de Kerjean."

"Then if you don't want me to run you through the body, you must go and tell the truth to all the other noblemen and gentlemen at court; for your letter and the three keepsakes you sent made them think otherwise."

D'Aiguillon promised to make a full and public confession, and to give back the presents; but the lady, smiling, told him he might keep them, by way of recompense for the good he had done the poor folks of the neighbourhood, by inventing such a fine, strong kind of stuff.

From that time forth stout sacking (*ballins*) became more and more the staple of the Leon country (the Lyonesse of our Arthur's legends); but people never forget how it was first found out, and the rhyming proverb is still extant:

The first of the sacking-makers
Learn'd his trade at Kerjean.

One more tale, which we will give very briefly, for it is, in essentials, the same that many must have read in Irish and Welsh story-books. Ker-is (the city under the sea) exists in Lough Neagh, in Cardigan Bay, in more than one spot along the west coast of Ireland. You may read a good deal about it in Mr. Kennedy's book, *Legendary Fictions of the Irish Celts*, out of a review of which the Times managed the other day to get an explanation of Fenianism. Grallon was a king of Cornouailles—a better never held sceptre. But his daughter Dahut was a wild girl, not bad, but flighty and fond of freedom. So, being, moreover, a great enchantress, she had built herself a town out at sea, where is now the Bay of Douarnenez; and there she lived in splendour, waited on by all the korigans (fairies) of Cornouailles and Vannes. All her palace shone as if covered

* Red-head.

with gold and polished steel. Her stables, where she kept the sea-horses whom she had tamed, one for every soul in Ker-is, were of marble, red, white, or black, according to the colour of the horses. On these the townspeople rode out to trade with distant ports, or to practise the piracy so fashionable in those times; and so rich had the Ker-is folks become, that they used to measure out their corn with silver quart measures. I think—don't you?—that the picture will suit many a Norse town of the old time, when the sea was the great highway, connected the scattered parts of that maritime empire, and the Vikings (not kings at all, but sons of the wics or creeks) used to make their ships look as much like dragons as possible. Well, riches were too much for these Ker-is men, just as they were for Sir Balaam. They drove out all the poor, without even building a workhouse for them on the shore. If Christ had come among them dressed in sackcloth, they would have ordered him off. Their only church was so neglected that the very beadle had lost the keys, and the swallows built safely all round the opening of the door. Balls, feasts, and stage plays, from morning to morning again—those were what they spent their time in. The wonder was, how the good King Grallon could live in such a place; indeed, he wouldn't have done so, but that he happened, after the fashion of the day, to have given up his own palace to a wonder-working hermit, who one evening made him and all his suite a grand feast all out of an inch of fish and a cup of spring water, when they got to the hermitage after a hard day's hunting. Let us hope that Grallon didn't hear all about his daughter's goings on; for, the story goes, that when among the lords and gallants, drawn by the renown of Ker-is as a "place of pleasaunce," she saw any one who took her fancy, she would give him, while they were dancing, a magic mask, by putting on which he could pass unseen to her bower built on the very edge of the sea-dyke. At dawn she would hand him once again the magic mask; but, this time, as soon as he had got to the foot of her tower, the springs would grow tight and choke him, and then would come out a man in black and throw him into a dark gulf, whence even now-a-days the belated peasant hears a wailing which is the cry of the souls of these unfortunates. One night there was a grand feast, so full of guests that their noise roused even poor Grallon in his neglected corner of the palace. There had come a strange lord, tall and splendidly dressed, and with such a thick red beard all over his face, that little could be seen of him but the eyes, which flashed like two stars. He paid his compliments to Dahut in such well-turned triplets, that not a bard of them all could cope verses with him; and when he began to talk to the company, oh! how clever he was in all

kinds of wickedness. The Ker-is people fancied they had got a good way ahead in that sort of thing, but it seemed he knew all the bad that ever had been or ever would be invented on the earth. At last he taught them a new kind of dance, which was, in fact, just what the seven deadly sins are always dancing down in hell. To set them going, he brought in a dwarf dressed in goat-skin and playing the bagpipes. Scarcely had he blown up his chanter, than Dahut and the rest went off dancing like mad people; and Red Beard easily managed to steal from the princess's girdle the silver key of the sluice in the sea-dyke. King Grallon was musing over a dying fire, listening to the strange far-off sounds of merriment, when the door opened, and, with a glory round his head, a crosier in his hand, and a cloud of incense round him, appeared the hermit, to whom he had given his palace and his capital city.

"Rise, Sir King," said he. "The iniquity of Dahut is at the full; this night Ker-is shall be delivered over to perdition."

The king, terrified, called an old servant or two who were still about him, took his treasure, mounted his black charger, and galloped after the saint, who was going through the air like a feather. At the dyke they saw Red Beard opening all the sluices, and letting in the sea. The waves were already licking the sides of the houses like flames, and the poor sea-horses, shut up in their stalls, were roaring with fright. Grallon wanted to rouse the town.

"No," said the saint; "you must be content to save yourself."

But the father could not leave his daughter. He rode back, and saw her standing wild with terror on the palace stairs. She jumped up behind him, and they dashed along. But soon the water rose up to the saddle-girths—up, up above the king's knees.

"Help, help, thou holy man!"

"Throw down that weight of wickedness which is behind thee, and, by God's grace, there may yet be time."

But no; Grallon could not cast aside his daughter. The water still rose, when the saint touched the fainting girl's shoulder with his crosier, and off she slid at once into the whelming waters. On dashed the charger, and just reached the ground in time; and there, to this very day, they show you his hoof-marks on the cliff by Garrec. More than one oak-wood (as the man who told the story said) has had time to grow up and to die off since these things were. But the story lives in the mouths of the peasants of Cornouailles, and up to the Revolution a fleet of fishing-boats used to go out once a year with a priest to say mass over the ruined city; for there are ruins here sure enough. French antiquaries talk of their being Roman, and some enthusiasts even describe more than one very beautiful tessellated pavement.

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